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SARDAR PATEL
THE WORKING OF HIS MIND

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SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

EARLY LIFE

Born on October 31, 1875, Vallabhbhai Patel is a hereditary fighter. His father, a pattidar of Karamsad near Nadiad, went all the way from Gujerat to Delhi to fight against the British in the famous revolt of 1857. Child Vallabhbhai was nurtured in the simple atmosphere of his village home and took his first lessons at the feet of his valiant father. That the Seventy-three years of his life have been full of strenuous endeavour and ceaseless strife, is in no small measure a legacy of the Robin Hood traditions in which he had to pass his early childhood.

As a schoolboy Vallabhbhai was no good at studies, but he was quite active otherwise. He was the despair of many a teacher, who could never curb his rebellious spirit. Once he organised a vigorous revolt against a corrupt teacher alleged to be profiteering in paper and other stationery and had eventually to be removed from that school. Who knew then that this was his first preparatory course in the great fight he would one day be called upon to wage against an army of profiteers.

He matriculated from the Nadiad High School and set up as a lawyer at Godhra Bar after passing the District Pleaders' Examination. He developed a marked preference for criminal cases.

taking little interest in the intricacies of the Civil Law. On the criminal side too, defence in daring murder and dacoity cases like that of, etc., had his first preference and he would be at his best while arguing these. Soon he acquired a reputation among the clients, and also became a terror to the magistracy. It is said that the Resident Magistrate at Borsad shifted his Court to Anand just to escape the terror that Patel was. And when Patel shifted to Anand, he staged another retreat to Board !

Young Patel was very keen on qualifying for the bar. The day he was able to save the necessary amount, he applied for admission at Middle Temple. The admission card, when received, bore his initials—V. J. (Patel) instead of his full name Vallabhbhai Jhaverbhai Patel. Co-incidentally this could serve his elder brother Shri Vithalbhai almost equally well, as most of other particulars were more or less identical. It is said the elder Patel only jokingly remarked that this really was his admission card and not Vallabhbhai's. The younger Patel took the hint in all seriousness. He at once put his savings at the disposal of Shri Vithalbhai and insisted on the latter's availing the opportunity prior to himself. Who else but a devoted brother like Vallabhbhai could make the remarkable sacrifice and with such a loving grace ?

A few years later Vallabhbhai himself went to London and was called to the Bar at the Middle Temple. Unlike during his school days in India, Vallabhbhai used to study 16 hours a day and no wonder he obtained a first class topping the list of successful candidates at the Bar Examination. Having finished his main task, he

returned to India straight, 'without visiting the continent or any other place. And since then Patel has never left the Indian shores again.

After his return from England in February 1913, he joined the bar at Ahmedabad and distinguished himself as a leading counsel of the place. Mr. G. V. Mavlankar, the speaker of the Dominion Parliament, who was Sardar Patel's fellow lawyer and friend at the bar, gives a very graphic description of the early career of Barrister Patel:—

"A smart young man dressed in a well-cut shirt with a felt hat worn slightly at an angle, piercing and bright eyes, not given to many words, receiving visitors with just a smile but not entering into any conversation, maintaining firm and pensive looks, appearing almost to look upon the world with a sort of superiority complex, talking with an impress of confidence and superiority whenever he opened his lips and carrying an appearance of sternness and reserve. Such was the new barrister, who had come to Ahmedabad for practice. The new barrister was naturally a centre of attention for the Junior bar. His personality, demeanour, etc., had their own attractions, mixed feelings of attraction, respect, awe and perhaps a feeling of subdued resentment also at the way he seemed to look at others."

Patel was not a lawyer of the Gandhian school. Once he accepted a brief, he would leave no stone unturned to save his client by all possible means. Describing Patel as a distinguished lawyer, Mr. Mavlankar further says, his cross-examination of witness was brief but pointed, and he showed such a masterly judgment of men that he could make out by a piercing glance at the witness

as to the type the witness was and would lead his attack by way of cross-examination accordingly. His conduct of his cases always exhibited thorough mastery of facts, a proper and correct estimate of the opponent's case and line of attack and a carefully planned defence and attack. But the one great quality which struck everybody and made him the object of admiration was his fearlessness with which he would deal with the court in which he was appearing. He would never allow the judge to outstep, even in the least, the limits of courtesy, nor would he allow or tolerate any unfair, unjust or improper leaning on the part of the court in favour of the police or the prosecution, and would call a spade a spade." These rare qualities of head and heart enabled him soon to establish a flourishing practice, and become one of the prominent citizens of Ahmedabad.

CONTACT WITH GANDHIJI

The first meeting between Gandhiji and Patel which took place during those days throws an interesting sidelight on the intensely practical outlook which Patel had developed at that early age. Patel used to spend his evenings at the local Gujerat Club with his fellow lawyers and Gandhiji, who had after his return from South Africa made Ahmedabad the centre of his activities, would be a frequent topic of discussion among them. Patel would invariably ridicule Gandhiji's ideas as impractical and utopian. The spectacle of a tiny little barrister planning to overthrow the mighty British Empire by the feeble weapons of truth and non-violence would seem particularly funny to one who had imbibed the fiery traditions of the armed revolt of 1857. The story goes that when Gandhiji came to his Club particularly to address

the lawyers Patel did not think it worthwhile to attend to Gandhiji's verbiage and kept himself busy playing bridge on a corner table with a sarcastic smile on his lips.

But then, he found Gandhiji tenaciously persisting in his endeavours and Patel's keen eyes discerned something particularly self-assuring about the fascinating personality of this man. Patel was a man of strong likes and dislikes, and once Gandhiji was able to make his mark on Patel's mature mind, he bade good-bye to his lucrative profession and joined Gandhiji as his second-in-command. This was perhaps one of the biggest and most remarkable decisions of Patel's life, and has since proved to be of the greatest significance vitally influencing the history of the country.

BRIEF SKETCH OF POLITICAL CAREER

Patel was past forty years when he joined Gandhiji in 1916. He had come in close contact with a variety of men and matters and had learnt to work hard and take life seriously. Gandhiji utilised his services in organising the Kisans of Gujarat, which was to become the first venue of his experiments in mass *Satyagraha*. Patel acted as Gandhiji's chief lieutenant in the great Ahmedabad labour strike of 1918. These first lessons in his master's new technique of *Satyagraha* enabled Patel to lead the struggles at Kaira and Nagpur (*National Flag Satyagraha*) exclusively on his own and win laurels for his singular triumphs.

World War I had ended and India had been rewarded for her sacrifices by the ghastly massacre

of Jallianwala Bagh. It was a turning point of great significance in the history of Indian nationalist movement. The very soul of a vast nation was stirred. Patel had his full share in this powerful upsurge. He ascended the All-India stage as Chairman of the Reception Committee at 1921 session of the Indian National Congress held at Ahmedabad, and was selected soon after to lead the final phase of non-co-operation struggle at Bardoli. Unfortunately the tragic events at Chaura Chauri intervened and not only the Bardoli campaign but the entire non-co-operation movement was called off.

Shortly after this abrupt decision by Gandhiji occurred the serious split at Gaya between the Gandhian group and the 'changers' led by C. R. Das. In the absence of Gandhiji, who was in jail, Sardar Patel was one of the two principal champions of the 'No-changers,' the other being Chakravarti Rajagopalachari. A compromise followed at Delhi and Sardar Patel again turned his attention towards Bardoli, which was still groaning under the after-effects of the 1921 struggle. Agrarian discontent, which had taken a strong root in the soil of Bardoli had greatly enraged the bureaucratic regime, so much so that the whole Taluqa was placed under punitive police. This had rendered the life of the poor innocent peasants simply miserable. Sardar Patel lost no time in taking up cudgels with the authorities and had the punitive police withdrawn. Patel was gratefully hailed as the saviour of the poor and the oppressed.

In the peace years, 1924—28, Patel contributed his full quota of public service as the chairman of Ahmedabad Municipality. His ability to create an

organisation in chaos was put to a successful test at the time of the great Gujerat floods. A vast population would have been overwhelmed by a catastrophe of unparalleled magnitude but for Sardar Patel, who saved the situation by incessant relief and rescue work organised without any help from the Government.

In 1928, came the historic Bardoli Satyagraha—the organisational masterpiece of Patel. The soldier in Patel came into full-fledged action in Bardoli, and here were witnessed some of the rarest performances of great oratory and leadership. Bardoli was a unique personal triumph for Patel and it rightly made him the uncrowned 'Sardar of Gujerat.'

After Bardoli Sardar's name was on every lip and it was a fitting mark of public appreciation that he was elected to the presidential *gaddi* of the Indian National Congress, the greatest honour that India's teeming millions could confer on any Indian. He presided over the 1931 session held at Karachi and gratefully acknowledged the great honour done to him as one done to Gujerat. He went to jail in the Salt Satyagraha and continued President up to 1934. This was followed by the Parliamentary era, of which he had been the chief architect.

His contribution in bringing the country to the 1942 "Quit India" stage and later in the negotiations leading to the formation of the Interim Government in November 1946, and his important role as India's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for States and Home Affairs are topics which will briefly be dealt with in the following pages.

THE MAN

Sardar Patel is gifted with a versatile personality, but the man in him is perhaps a little obscure. His outward appearance is seldom an indication of what is passing within him. His solid build and the broad bald skull present him as a traditional Roman Emperor of Yore. His grim look does not encourage one to approach him. Yet in spite of the devious 'ocean of mystery' that he seems, there is much that can be understood and felt about him. In the words of Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, "with his stern, rugged and grave exterior, he is like an iron casket that holds rare and hidden gems of devotion, sweetness and charm."

Patel is a man of few words. He believes in concrete action. He has none of Nehru's eloquent idealism or the Mahatma's religious mysticism. But he follows the Mahatma as no one else does. He translates his master's ideas into intensely practical politics, leaving aside the mystic garb in which they are expressed. So the best way to judge the man in him is by his actions.

Patel's coolness even in jail, which is a place where man reveals himself in his true elements, is proverbial. When he had to pass some sixteen months in Yervada Jail, in the company of Gandhiji, the latter discovered such traits of his character as were never known even to him before. Gandhiji said "It was a great privilege for me to have been with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. I was well aware of his matchless bravery, but I had never lived with him as I have had the good fortune during the last 16 months. The affection with which he covered me recalls to me that of my

own dear mother: I never knew him to possess motherly qualities.....His solicitude for the farmers of Bardoli and Kaira I can never forget."

Sardar Patel is in his best elements whenever he speaks to big gatherings. He does it with emotion and the power of his words is irresistible. It is on occasions like these that one can see some of the rare traits of the man in him. In one of his speeches delivered at Bombay just after his release from Ahmednagar Jail, he referred to the great tragedy of the Bengal famine of 1943. His anguish over the callousness of the Government and the profiteers responsible for the ghastly deed was uncontrollable. "What pained us most in the jail", he said, "was the tragedy of Bengal's famine. Millions were literally poured into the furnace of famine, but there was none to rescue them. No one even came out and shouted, "loot if you can," "murder if you need," to save their lives. The result was that we lost more men than the total casualties of the Allies in the present War. Isolated as we were from the rest of the world, our heart-burning was futile. But the tragedy was heightened by those who thrived on this toll of hunger. While the streets of Calcutta were full of corpses awaiting cremation and burial, white and brown aristocrats were feasting. What greater blot can there be on our public life? What a society is this that even when million died, none gave a battle cry and organised food raids for the hungry?"

He actually wept when he spoke these words and made his audience weep. These were no mere words. What Patel did in Bardoli proves that he would actually have led 'food raids' in Bengal, were he not behind the prison bars.

The milk of human kindness can be seen overflowing in these words of righteous indignation.

Another quality to counteract his grimness, is his great sense of sarcastic humour. Whenever he hurls scathing ridicule on his adversaries in his public addresses, people rock with laughter. Speaking on the 'Quit India' resolution at Bombay he asked the British to hand over power to anybody—the League or the Mahasabha or even the criminals and dacoits. "We would rather be ruled by criminals than by the British," said he. How Sardar Patel successfully kept up the morale of Bardoli peasants by cracking jokes at the expense of the "white sahibs" is narrated by Mr. K. M. Munshi in his book, *I FOLLOW THE MAHATMA*. The Commissioner, who used to attach the buffaloes of the peasants, was dubbed as the 'buffalo-Tiger' after the ridiculing idea of an insect known as the 'tiger of flies' in Gulerati. The joke would enable people not only to augh away the loss of their beloved cattle but also to banish fear from their hearts. Another and much more enjoyable joke of the Sardar that received wide publicity was in regard to those buffaloes, which were locked behind closed doors for fear of distraintment and turned whitish in colour under the insanitary conditions. Mr. Munshi describes the incident as follows: "The villagers were sad at this discoloration; but the Sardar was equal to the occasion. The white Commissioner did not like a black buffalo, so he converted her into a *madamdi* (a diminutive of 'madam', used for European ladies in Indian languages)!" The joke spread to every village and was on every tongue "The Saheb turned the buffalo into *madamdi*." These terrible poison-tipped shafts rarely missed their mark. They spread round the villages day

after day and the afflicted forgot their miseries and escaped demoralisation."

His speeches are full of satire. This is how he hit at the Viceroy after his release from Ahmednagar : "The previous Viceroy had threatened us with a public trial for the August happenings. We were not perturbed, but got ready and intimated to him that his Government too could not escape impeachment. But he has already gone home....." Further he lashed at Mr. Amery in the following words : "A former Secretary of State for India patted his own back by saying on the eve of Gandhi's arrest that the caravan was going on while not a dog even barked. But this time the dogs did not stop at barking but did a pretty bit of biting too. And the next struggle would witness the biting of rabid dogs."

Patel's biting sarcasm is never indicative of any arrogance in the man. He is very strong and almost unbending ; once he has decided upon the line of action to take ; but he is humility itself as far as his dealings with people are concerned. The story of his securing a broom and sweeping the streets and lavatories of Ahmedabad, when he was the Chairman of that Municipality, may be a pure ingenuity of the American journalist, but those who have seen him working in any capacity will testify that he is actually inspired with the loftiest spirit of public service and believes more in setting an example than in mere precepts.

Sardar Patel has a heart as deep as the sea. Nothing can disturb the equanimity of his mind and the singleness of his purpose. This can be

illustrated from the following incident. Patel was on his feet arguing a defence case in the Court when was handed over an urgent telegram. He opened the envelope and glanced through the contents. It announced the death of his wife in a Bombay Hospital. He folded it, put it in his pocket and proceeded with his argument, as if nothing had happened to interrupt him, or even to warrant a change of mood in the man.

He possesses indefatigable energy. Even to-day, when he is running his seventy-fifth year, he knows no rest. Besides looking after the provincial ministries as member of the Parliamentary Board he is responsible for a number of other non-official organisations. As member of the Government, he is the Deputy Prime Minister and is in-charge of three important ministries Home, Information and Broadcasting, and States. His enormous capacity to shoulder multifarious responsibilities and to find a suitable solution for even the most intricate of problems, is amazing. Men of reflective temperament like Gandhiji and Pandit Nehru require hours of solitude, when they should be left entirely to themselves, in order to be able to think out policies. A man of action like Patel has no such requirements. All his time is public.

A word about his personal habits and tastes. Once he left the Bar and bade good-bye to western manners and dress, he adapted himself to a strict Ashram-life. It is said he took a vow before Gandhiji not to possess any property and he strictly adheres to the undertaking to this day. Long sojourns in jail and close association with Mahatmaji have made 'simplicity'—both outward and inward the very texture of his being. He

looks like a typical Gujarati farmer, and when somebody humorously described 'agriculture' to be his only 'culture' he uttered an obvious truth in a figurative language. Some of his strictly personal habits have been very interestingly described in a recent issue of the American Magazine *Time* in the following words: "He eats little, drinks no alcohol, quit smoking when he first went to jail.....His only exercise is a walk when he rises at 4-30 A.M. His only recreation is bouncing a ball across the room to his grandchildren. He has never seen a movie. He care little about the world outside his country. Of 300 books in his Bombay library, every one is by an Indian, mostly about India," There may be factual inaccuracies in the above statement, but it does describe the purely Swadeshi fibre of which the great Sardar is made.

THE SOLDIER AND THE GENERAL

Sardar Patel has times without number emphasised that he is a fighter and not a leader. As a matter of fact, he is being too humble when he says so, because judging from his role as a member of the Congress Working Committee, where he has been the chief spokesman of the Rightists, and also his performances as Congress President and Chairman of the Parliamentary sub-committee or as member of the present Parliamentary Board, one can see that there has hardly been a matter of policy, specially on matters internal, in which he has not made his due and sometimes perfectly decisive contribution. But he is partly right in making this statement for he is the man, who really executes the policy and carries out the programme laid down by the Congress. It is in this sense that we find the

ideal soldier in him. An unflinching loyalty to the leader, the most important attribute of a soldier, can be seen at its best Sardar Patel. He says, "There is only one leader in the country. If there is any other, he may come forward to show the way. But until this happens, we should implicitly follow the word of 'Mahatma Gandhi.' "

His combined role as the soldier and the general was best illustrated in the Bardoli Satyagraha. There he was a complete master of the whole show. Mr. K. M. Munshi who saw Sardar Patel in action at Bardoli, has put it beautifully : "The Sardar had unique experience of civic and public life, of the bloody riots of Ahmedabad, of the non-violent struggle of Nagpur, of political manoeuvres and the non-co-operation of Gandhiji, A seasoned warrior, he knew the weakness of the officials as well as the strength of the people. He could make men dance to his tune. His steel had passed through the fire of the alchemist and come out with a finer edge. He had the great general's discerning eye for the true and the loyal, for the enemy, for the traitor and the obstructionist. The art of managing men he knew and knew well."

Adolf Hitler was indisputably a great leader of men. According to him, "ability to move masses of men" is one of the prerequisites of effective leadership. Sardar Patel, who is a great orator, possesses this gift in abundance. Mr. Munshi again describes the spell of his words in the following terms :

"The Sardar moved from village to village and thousands listened to his message with fond devotion. He alone spoke in Bardoli and indeed

he could speak.....His eloquence has intensely human elements. Unlike Gandhiji, he can be truculent. He can attack well and effectively when the need arises. He can demolish or denounce by a withering phrase or a picturesque smile. He can move his audience to laughter or tears by using idioms which go straight to the hearts of villagers. The varying use of linguistic and rhetorical wealth, the ability to deal sledgehammer blows to opponents, the skill to touch the hearts of men or inspire them to action made Sardar Vallabhbhai's address to the Bardoli peasants the high-water mark of eloquence"

Mahadeo Desai paid the proper tribute to the Sardar, when he said in his *The Story of Bardoli* "A leader had never a worthier following and the followers never a worthier leader."

THE CHIEF ORGANISER OF THE CONGRESS

After Bardoli, it will be no exaggeration to say that Patel was the most important man after Gandhiji. Pandit Motilal Nehru had just left the scene for ever, and Pandit Jawaharlal and Subhas Bose had not yet reached the top in the higher counsels of the Congress. Bardoli made Patel an all-India figure and it may be said that his election to the Congress Presidentship was more a tribute to the personality and organisational capacity of this distinguished son of India than a mere recognition of his signal services to Gujarat.

The two most important resolutions on Fundamental Rights and Duties of Man and the Economic and Social programme passed at the 1931 Karachi session, although inspired by the

younger elements led by Pandit Jawaharlal, were left to be executed by the great Bardoli organiser. Unfortunately the country was again in the throes of a battle against the British on an eleven-point programme embodying the essentials of these resolutions and nothing constructive could be embarked upon. Thus the real test of the Sardar's organising ability came only after 1934, when he was released after a long imprisonment and found the Congress in a crisis.

The sudden end of the three years old struggle had caused demoralisation in the ranks of the Congress. The entire movement was suddenly overtaken by a defeatist mentality. Lack of confidence and the absence of any definite programme for the future destroyed the artificial unity created by a common struggle. Naturally people's minds were again turned towards parliamentary activities. The constitutionalists in the Congress became again active. Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya and Mr. Aney formed a new Nationalist Party. The Congress Socialist Party, which had just come into existence, came forward with a Marxist Programme. Subhas Bose, who could not merge himself with the Socialists, turned his attention to other leftist elements with a view to organise them into an extreme nationalist group.

The Gandhian Group, which to all intents and purposes, was still the most dominating single block, had a stock-taking of the whole situation and realised that their immediate need was a strong hand, which could re-vitalised the Congress machinery to suit the new emergency. It got such a hand in Sardar Patel, who relin-

quished the presidential chair for Dr. Rajendra Prasad, another staunch Rightist, and himself took charge of the newly created Congress Parliamentary Board as one of its chief organisers.

Patel has several times been accused of being a blind follower of Gandhiji, but facts speak otherwise. Whenever he is at the helm of affairs, he realises his great responsibility as nobody can, and totally refuses to make a people's organisation the experimenting ground for his master's idealistic doctrines. This can be seen in his bold stand against Gandhiji's spinning franchise programme. Like a hardheaded practical politician he openly declared: "It is time for Gandhiji to retire. I won't be sorry if he decides not to attend Congress.....There is no attempt to carry Congress by storm. The Gandhi party is not going to thrust spinning franchise on Congress." This was the spirit of the true organiser, who had to face hard realities and find a solution for them.

After the Bombay Congress (1934) Sardar Patel made extensive tours of the country and explained the stand of the Congress with regard to the Communal Award—one of the important points of difference between different groups. He visited the Punjab and other places exhorting people to vote for the Congress. Sardar Patel knew that although Gandhiji was technically out of the Congress, he still exercised the great influence among the masses. And his slogan was "A vote for the Congress is a vote for Gandhiji." The Congress achieved thumping victory at most of the places and returned to the Central Assembly the best team, which later on supplied Prime Ministers and Ministers of great ability to the provinces.

In the year 1936 there opened another phase of Congress parliamentary programme in connection with provincial elections. The Congress manifesto was prepared at Lucknow and this time the franchise being considerably widened, the Congress had to launch a country-wide campaign and straighten its organisational machinery in every nook and corner of the country. Sardar Patel was selected a member of the new parliamentary committee and chairman of the Regional committee for the provinces of Bombay, Gujerat, Maharashtra and Karnatak. Sardar Patel visited most of the provinces and returned very optimistic about the success of the Congress. The great campaigner knew the trends of the times and declared with confidence: "When the Congress roller is in action, all pebbles and stones will be levelled." And so it actually happened. The Congress was returned in overwhelming majority in six out of the eleven provinces and was the largest single party in Assam and the N-W. Frontier Province.

After about six months higgling, a compromise formula was evolved and the Congress accepted office on the assurance of non-interference from the Provincial Governors in the day-to-day working of the Ministries. By this time, Sardar Patel had become the Chairman of the re-constituted Parliamentary Sub-committee with Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Maulana Azad as his member-colleagues, and it is in this capacity that Sardar Patel showed his qualities as the chief pilot of the ship of the State.

THE POLITICAL BOSS

For the first time the Congress had to run

an administration wherein the real power lay in the hands of the titular heads and the bureaucracy and where the responsibilities of office were thrown on the shoulders of popular Ministers. In its election campaign, the Congress had, although with due caution, held out high hopes of agrarian and industrial reforms to the people. But when they actually came into office, they found that their difficulties were enormous and they could hardly fulfil even a part of the people's expectations. As a matter of fact, the Congress had accepted office to continue their fight for freedom from within and only wanted to save people from the hands of reactionaries, who would otherwise wield power and harm the popular interests. The situation was full of complications and difficulties. There was the danger of the rank and file mistaking the sham of power for real authority and of proving troublesome on the frustration of their exaggerated expectations. There was the danger of a weakening, consequently, of the foundations of that great fighting organ, the Indian National Congress, which was still far away from the achievement of its ultimate goal. Again a party has to be more cautiously on its guard against nepotism, corruption and demoralisation entering its ranks in a thousand subtle ways when it is in power than when it is fighting the battle of freedom and when only the trusted soldiers can afford to come under its banner. Sardar Patel's task as Chairman of the Parliamentary Subcommittee of the Congress was, therefore, particularly difficult. Yet he shouldered the onerous burden of his duties with remarkable success.

The peasantry in the U. P. and Bihar was impatient with the landlords. They were

clamouring for far-reaching land reforms and relief in rent and agriculturist's debts. Under the guidance of Sardar Patel both the ministries passed tenancy legislation giving relief to the oppressed tenants. Similar measures were adopted in Bombay and Madras. In Bombay, Sardar Patel was more or less directly concerned with the carrying out of an extensive rural reconstruction and prohibition programme. The Bombay Trade Disputes Bill was one of his outstanding contributions in the field of constructive legislation. The country was in need of more production and a healthy development of her industries. The leftist elements were busy gaining popularity by fomenting inopportune strikes. Sardar Patel rightly provided in the Act for compulsory arbitration and a period in which both official and non-official agencies must exhaust all avenues of peace before the workers be allowed to go on strike. There was bitter opposition to the bill and it was described as the "Black Bill." Even firing had to be resorted to against a violent demonstration of workers in Bombay and Sholapur, which acts on the part of a popular Government were very much deplored. It was a matter of considerable embarrassment for popular ministries to be confronted with country-wide strikes of labourers and students on one pretext or the other. But it must be said to the credit of Sardar Patel that calmly and firmly he guided his teams in the eight provinces to withstand the wave of unrest with courage and tact. There were occasions, luckily rare, like Bombay-firing which was the result of an inadvisably hasty step on the part of Mr. K. M. Munshi, then Home Minister of Bombay, which made the position of the Congress High Command rather awkward. But on the whole the

popular ministries carried out their nation building policies and programmes with remarkable success and public approval. In spite of strong opposition from some influential quarters, prohibition was launched in Madras, Bombay, U. P., Bihar and other places and it gained considerable success in a short time. But for the resignation of the Congress Ministries in 1939, and the subsequent apathy and slackening on the part of the Section 93 Governments, it is certain that this bold step towards implementing one of the principal items of Congress constructive programme would have achieved results wholly exceptional. The credit for this must go partly to Sardar Patel personally—himself a staunch teetotaler.

Although Sardar Patel had little time to actively participate in the working out of the details of the Wardha Scheme of Education and the National Planning Committee, he did offer his whole-hearted co-operation to both the schemes as far as their implementation in the provinces was concerned. And it may be said that these were the two most outstanding contributions of the Patel regime touching the two most vital problems of our national life

This was not all. As has already been mentioned, Sardar Patel was now the chief of a 'Congress in power' with all its implications. The administration in the provinces—most of them with their own peculiar and intricate problems—had to run under a central control and with a certain measure of uniformity in fundamentals. Sardar Patel had to act as a vigilant watch-dog both against those who lagged behind and those who rushed ahead.

This meant occasional purges, even though it affected at times the highest in the ministerial and other responsible ranks. Perhaps this was the most delicate part of his job and there are bound to be different opinions about his success in this sphere.

The first of this category of problems presented itself at the very beginning of the selection of Congress chiefs for the provinces. The great difficulty presented itself in Patel's own province, Bombay. Mr. K. F. Nariman was the acknowledged leader of the city, and he accused Sardar Patel of helping his opponents in 1934 elections, which had led to his withdrawal from the contest. Again, when lesser men like B. G. Kher received recognition at the hands of the High Command in 1937, Nariman made all sorts of wild accusations against Sardar Patel, who had been charged with the task of running the eight ministries in the country. An inquiry was held about the conduct of Mr. Nariman by Gandhiji, and he was declared unworthy of holding any responsible position in the Congress. It would have been a great tactical mistake if rebel Nariman were put at the head of a Government, whose chief boss was to be Sardar Patel himself. Perhaps Nariman would have done the same, were he in Patel's place. Poor Nariman had to recede into the background as the first victim of the Sardar's iron-discipline.

The other sensational case of purge at Sardar Patel's hands was that of Dr. N.B. Khare, Premier of C.P. It was a case of gross breach of party discipline and craftiness on the part of a Provincial Premier. Dr. Khare had his old differences with Pandit Ravi Shankar Shukla and Shri D.P.

Misra, his two most important colleagues in the cabinet. Repeated quarrels had occurred between them, and the Sardar had tried to patch up the differences from time to time. But matters came to a head when Dr. Khare in collaboration with the Governor of the province, planned to see his colleagues out by tendering an unwarranted resignation with a view to be in a position to select a new team. Wisely enough the two ministers did not resign, and the truth being out the whole case turned against Dr. Khare himself. Sardar Patel took a very serious view of Dr. Khare's conduct, who was ultimately asked not only to vacate the Premier's chair but also to relinquish his membership of the Assembly. This action of the Congress High Command received wide publicity both in Indian and foreign press with varied comments. *The News Review* reported in characteristic journalese: "Broom wielder Patel raised the dust even in the far away corridors of Whitehall's India Office. Wires buzzed with reports that he was sweeping along the way of Fascism." But the spirit behind it was approved by all including Pandit Nehru and Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, the latter declaring that "Khare would have been shot in Germany." Mr. Bose supported Sardar Patel's action in this case in spite of his differences with Patel in many other matters.

The third and perhaps the most controversial case of a purely political, non-violent purge, in which Sardar Patel played an important part, was that of Shri Subhas Bose himself, then Congress president. It was, as a matter of fact, a simple trial of strength between the Gandhian block of Rightists in the Congress on one hand, and Subhas Bose and a few of his

leftist associates like K.F. Nariman and M.N. Roy on the other.

Whenever top-ranking leaders of a popular movement got involved in a tussle of power politics, the rift thus created is bound to have divergent repurcussions on contemporary public opinion. One cannot forget the great excitement, which the Bose Affair caused in the entire country and the serious threat it meant to the solidarity of the Congress organisation. It came as a terrible shock to the political loyalties of the rank and file of a movement which had stood and acted as a solid block for nearly two generations. It led to an unending controversy about the respective roles—glorious or inglorious—played by the parties involved. Sardar Patel, the chief of the Gandhian group, came in for considerable criticism at the hands of Mr. Bose's followers and was variously branded as 'The Iron Dictator,' 'The Indian Hitler' and so on. Events pertaining to Mr. Bose's later life, such as his quitting the Indian scene by a mysterious disappearance, his organising an Indian Liberation Movement in the Axis countries, his subsequent roles as the head of the Azad Hind Government and the Supreme Commander of the valiant I.N.A. and the most glorious of all, his tragic end in the service of the motherland, have made Patel's old critics all the more bitter against him. But it would be grossly unfair to judge the Sardar against this highly sentimental background which has little to do with the point at issue as such.

If one were to review the contemporary political trends in an international setting, both Sardar Patel and Mr. Bose were the Indian

pattern of 'Dictators' in the long line of the class getting a phenomenal flourish all over the world during the post thirties of this country. But while distinguishing between the two, it must be clearly recognised that whereas Patel could be placed in the category of democratic dictators like war-time Churchill or Roosevelt, Subhas Bose definitely was after the pattern of a Mussolini or Stalin. This statement implies no disrespect to the revered personality of Netaji, it merely indicates the tremendous influence which the fascistic ideology exercised upon his mind, at least in the realm of means and methods, which fact can also be corroborated by his long ideological associations with some of the continental countries in preference to the western democracies.

Under such circumstances, the rivalry between Bose and Patel was very natural. Bose was impatient with old ways and wanted to proceed fast with his new ideas. But he could not do so as long as Patel was entrenched in power. The Patel group tried him for a year, found him troublesome and planned to have him out. Bose out. Bose retaliated, but his hit was ill-timed. He lost the battle and had to leave the scene. This is the substance of the whole controversy. Bose lost a political battle against a stronger adversary and there is no question of glorious or inglorious role on the part of Patel, who won the game through sheer superior strategy.

THE MINISTER AND STATESMAN.

Although Sardar Patel's role as a Minister of the Indian Government started as late as Septem-

ber 1946 with the formation of the Interim Government, he was no novice in the art of administration. Since the very beginning of his career in the Congress, he had been known for his organisational and executive capacities. He had always been the Mahatma's right hand man as far as the implementation of the latter's vast schemes of constructive programme were concerned. And it was on account of these considerations that Sardar Patel was chosen to guide the destinies of the Congress, when it decided to launch on a parliamentary career after 1934. John Gunther, the American journalist and author, paid Sardar Patel a just tribute, when he said in his *Inside Asia*: "He is the party boss *par excellence*. He is the Jim Farley, the ruthless party fixer and organiser. Once Gandhi has determined the line to take, it is Patel who rams it through.....He is the creator of the political machine, and he virtually controls the right Congress ministries."

Patel's contribution in the delicate and prolonged negotiations before the final transfer of power on August 15, 1947 has been highly important. Although in the earlier stages, the Congress was officially represented by Maulana Azad and Pandit Nehru, the real decisions were always taken in the Working Committee, where the Sardar has consistently maintained a dominant position. Besides making his due contribution in the Congress deliberations both on the occasion of the Simla Conference and the Cabinet Mission visit, Sardar Patel, along with Pandit Nehru was principally responsible for the historic announcement of June 3, 1947. He had been one of the staunchest supporters of the integrity of the Indian continent, but once his

experience of the Interim Government convinced him that amputation was the only remedy for India's diseased body politic, it took him no time to agree to the partition solution. Under his lead even supporters of Akhand Hindustan calmly accepted the necessity of Pakistan. So far as the implementation of the gigantic task of partition within a brief period of two months is concerned, it was left to Sardar Patel as the principle representative of the Congress on the Partition Committee to perform it. "It was," as Sardar Patel himself stated in Constituent Assembly of India on 12th December 1947, "no easy task to list and divide the assets and liabilities of the then Central Government." Rarely indeed have matters of such complexity been settled in so reasonable a way between two independent and sovereign States, and so far as the Indian side is concerned the period of this achievement can be fully taken by him.

HOME MINISTER

If one remembers the circumstances under which Pandit Nehru assumed charge of the Interim Government on September 2, 1946, one can understand the tremendous responsibility that was placed on the person selected for the Home portfolio. The Muslim League had categorically withdrawn its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan and refused to join the Constituent Assembly. Their exclusion from the Interim Government led them to incite open violence among their followers, and this led in turn to an unending cycle of loot, arson, and murder. The great Calcutta Killings was followed by incidents in Noakhali, Bihar, the Punjab and the Frontier.

Unfortunately for the country law and order in the provinces was a charge of the provincial governments. The only channel for the Centre to exercise any power over the provincial administrations was through the Governor-General, or in the cases of provinces under popular ministries through some kind of indirect party control. This placed the Home Ministry in difficult position in so far as the disturbances in Calcutta, Noakhali and the Punjab (specially after the registration of the Khizar Ministry) were concerned. Bihar and a few stray cases in the western U. P. were the only ones, where the Congress Interim Government could pull its weight through party channels, and not even the worst partisan will deny that Sardar Patel was able to control the situation in both these places with exemplary efficiency and speed. The post-partition riots in East Punjab and Delhi were such an unavoidable aftermath of the communal division of the country that no agency howsoever strong could have averted them. But the speed with which quiet was restored in both these places in spite of continued provocation across the border, must go to the credit of the Home Ministry under Sardar Patel.

Closely allied with the maintenance of law and order and the running of the whole administration in the changed circumstances, was the intricate question of the Secretary of State's services, their future and, above all, their adjustment to the new set up. The Home Ministry under Sardar Patel had inherited one of the most vexing legacies in these vital and delicate issues. A decision on the future of the British personnel of these services had become very urgent and all sorts of fantastic proposals

were coming forward with regard to the terms and conditions on which India could get rid of these favoured sons of the British Empire, most of whom were occupying key positions in the administration. Mr. Henderson, the British Under-Secretary of State for India, came to negotiate a final settlement. It is said the proposals he had brought with him, would have proved a serious drain on India's finances, but the straightforward manner in which Sardar Patel presented the case on behalf of India resulted in a fair compromise acceptable to both the parties, and Mr. Henderson made an unexpectedly speedy return

The next thorny problem which faced the Home Ministry almost simultaneously with the settlement of the future of the British personnel, was the services' re-organisation and filling in of the wide gaps that were caused by a sudden exit of about 90 percent of British officers, who upto now constituted about half the total strength of civil and police services in the country. The transfer of power, on the other hand, meant an increased demand for able and experienced hands, not only for the existing departments but also to man a number of new and expanded spheres of national activity which followed in the wake of the country's attainment of independence. The after-effects of partition, which, in certain respects, were the most trying and unprecedented for any government, howsoever resourceful and strong, brought in their own strain on India's depleted services. That the country has successfully withstood the crisis is in no small measure due to the Home Minister's excellent handling and disposition of the material available. That a good amount of cleaning-up has also been done by

Sardar Patel, can be seen by the steadily improving tone and standard of the services.

It is hoped that Sardar Patel will soon take or, may be, has already taken the necessary steps to reorganise India's Investigation services in the light of new circumstances and trends specially visible after the tragic assassination of Mahatma Gandhi.

MINISTER FOR INFORMATION & BROADCASTING

The Information and Broadcasting services of India, which had hitherto been used as a powerful instrument of British control over the rising tide of Indian nationalism and as a means of propaganda to justify the whitemen's burden over the coloured millions of this sub-continent were utterly unsuited to the needs of a new, independent India. Huge amounts had been spent in maligning India in countries like America, Canada and Britain during the years of the last war. Equally huge amounts were wasted in expending the notorious Central Investigation Department only to watch and harrass the non-violent soldiers of India's freedom struggle. Millions were squandered in producing Information Films in the name of educating the public on India's war-effort, a subjection in which the common man had not only had no interest but against which he had expressed his strongest protest in the form of the 1942 mass rebellion. The All India Radio, perhaps the strongest of all these means of British propaganda, was never allowed to be used by an Indian who could be called a representative of the Indian people. The language used by the All India Radio was

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

a classic example of the utter disregard and flouting of the popular opinion cherished and strongly voiced by the majority of Radio listening public.

This in brief was the condition when Sardar Patel took over this department. The whole machinery required to be over-hauled before it could fit into the new picture. The Sardar started with the All India Radio, and gave a clear enunciation of its language policy in the 1947 Budget session of the old Central Assembly. Those who are regular listeners of the Indian Radio programmes, can very well assess the far-reaching changes and improvements in the spheres of language, variety, utility and suitability of the present broadcasts compared to those before the advent of the existing regime. Although our Broadcasting services are still in their infancy and require vast expansion and reorganisation specially on the side of external publicity, the improvements that have been introduced during the last one and a half year are quite heartening. The opening of new Radio stations at Patna and Cuttack and the proposal to start many more at various provincial and State centres will go a long way to cater for the literary and cultural interests of the areas represented by these.

The reorganisation of the Publications Division, the restarting of the section of Information Films on new lines and the proposal to create an entirely new Research and Reference Division under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting are steps in the right direction and quite commensurate with independent India's needs for more vigorous internal as well as external publicity.

MINISTER FOR STATES

In the pre-1940 era, the attitude of the Congress was one of absolute non-interference in the affairs of the Indian States. But when after the Simon Commission (1928) and the Round Table Conferences (1930-31), the question of federation became a burning topic of the day, the Congress naturally focussed its attention on the condition of people in the States. Sardar Patel was one of the prominent leaders who introduced the case of States' peoples in the Congress politics. In his presidential address at Karachi Congress in 1931, he pointed out the disparity that would be created by the entry of the States into an all India federation. He emphasised some measure of direct representation for the States' peoples in the federal legislature and asked the rulers "to march abreast of the time-spirit, so that their association with the rest of India must not be to impede the progress of democracy and wholly inconsistent with the spirit of freedom."

In 1938, when provincial autonomy was working in the provinces, the British Government were exploring every possible means to bring the the federal part of the 1935 Constitution into operation. The Congress was dead against the federal scheme as envisaged under this Constitution. Speaking about Congress attitude towards federation and the princes Sardar Patel declared, "Like beasts people cannot be transferred without their consent. The Congress has refused to sit with the representatives of the Princes if the States' people are not properly represented and responsible governments installed in the States. We want to bid good-bye to Princedom."

We cannot allow our birth-right of self-determination to be encroached upon."

Who could imagine in 1938 that just after a decade it would be the proud privilege of Sardar Patel to translate his forthright declarations into action and redeem his promise to the States' people in such an unpredictable manner. The plan of June 3, 1947 had dealt almost exclusively with the problem of transferring power in British India. Not only was it mysteriously silent about the position of the Indian States in the new constitutional set up, but it complicated the problem of the States by declaring that paramountcy will lapse with the transfer of power in British India and that Indian States will become fully sovereign and independent. This created a feeling of great apprehension regarding the integrity of future Indian Dominion.

The Political Department, which had hitherto been administering the functions of paramountcy, was to be wound up before August 15, 1947. It was a problem to find out an agency, which could conduct the relations of the Government of India with the States in matters of common concern and if necessary to step in and fulfil the gap caused by the liquidation of the Political Department. Sardar Patel advised the creation of a States Ministry in order to tackle with the confused situation that had arisen as a result of the June 3 announcement. Naturally he was called upon to assume the charge of the new Ministry; and subsequent events have shown that there could not have been a better choice.

Sardar Patel's statement on the assumption of this new office inviting the Princes to play their

historic role in shaping the destiny of a future India, will stand out as one of the masterpieces of statesmanship dealing with one of the most difficult problems of modern Indian history. He appealed to the Princes not to forget that "it was owing to her politically fragmented condition and her inability to make a united stand that India has in the past succumbed to successive waves of invaders. Our mutual conflicts and internecine quarrels and jealousies have in the past been the cause of our downfall and our falling victims to foreign domination a number of times. We cannot afford to fall into these errors or traps again." Sardar Patel expressed his great satisfaction at the termination of the hated system of Paramountcy. But he pointed out that even outside the sphere of Paramountcy, there existed a wide sphere of common interests between the States and British India, in which relations can be regulated by a spirit of mutual and enlightened co-operation. He further emphasised that Paramountcy in the sense of submission to a foreign will, was a highly unjustified expedient and had properly been brought to an end; but the Sardar pointed out that it would be very unfortunate if this freedom from domination were utilised in a manner which would be injurious to the common interests of India or would militate against the ultimate paramountcy of popular interests and welfare or which resulted in the abandonment of that mutually useful relationship that has developed between British India and Indian States during the last century.

An Instrument of Accession was drawn up, which was easily acceptable to both the parties. The merits of this simple and straightforward document brought public tributes to its author,

Sardar Patel, from Lord Mountbatten who eulogised his statesmanship in the Constituent Assembly on August 15, 1947 thus : "Thanks to that far-sighted statesman, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Minister in charge of the States Department, a scheme was produced which appeared to me to be equally in the interests of the States as of the Dominion of India. It is a great triumph for the realism and sense of responsibility of the rulers and the governments of the States as well as for the Government of India that it was possible to produce an Instrument of Accession, which was equally acceptable to both sides, and one moreover so simple and straight forward that within less than three weeks practically all the States concerned had signed the Instrument of Accession."

To put the matter more precisely, by August 15, 1947, with the notable exceptions of Junagadh and Hyderabad, as many as 136 Salute and fully jurisdictional States had acceded to the Union. Kashmir had refused to accede to either of the Dominions because of its international boundaries. But compelled by the force of events, even these three States came in before long ; Hyderabad on the basis of a standstill Agreement, Kashmir by regular accession and Junagadh as the result of the Nawab's flight to Karachi.

A large number of semi- jurisdictional States also acceded to the Union on the basis of a separately designed Instrument of Accession, in which the Ruler had to " further declare that the Dominion of India may through such agency or agencies and in such manner, as it thinks fit, exercise in relation to the administration of civil and criminal justice in these States all such

powers, authority and jurisdiction as were at any time exercisable by His Majesty's representative for the exercise of the functions of the Crown in its relation with Indian States." In addition to these fully and semi-jurisdictional States the Indian political system had also contained a large body of wholly non-jurisdictional Talukas, Thanas and Estates which had direct relations with the Government. The Dominion Government took over all such Estates under its direct protection on August 15, 1947.

This was the foundation upon which the States' Minister was now to create his architectural pattern. How within a brief period of less than 8 months from the attainment of freedom Sardar Patel has changed the very face of India's map and brought almost the whole of princely India under administrations responsible to the people is amazing even to the most revolutionary among the leaders of the States' People 'Conference' who had been struggling apparently in vain for these changes for more than a decade.

As a result of the increased tempo of progress, there came about, first, the democratisation of the administration in States after the attainment of freedom by British India, and secondly, the remedy of mergers and unions. It became difficult for the smaller States to maintain their existence against the powerful wave of popular agitation. The first to succumb to this wave were the Orissa States. Sardar Patel paid a hurried visit to these States and arranged their merger with the province of Orissa. The move was welcomed both by the rulers and the people. Mergers with provinces followed in C.P. and Bombay, the latter taking over the eight Deccan

States, and another patch of territory of nearly 27,000 square miles from the Gujerat States.

Another form that these mergers have taken is the integration of a number of big and small States into one viable unit under a popular administration. The first of these new and great experiments was made when by merging about 13 Salute States, 107 limited-jurisdictional States and some 329 nonjurisdictional Estates in the Kathiawar Peninsula, a United States of Saurashtra was formed. This was a personal triumph for Sardar Patel, for the Kathiawar people had long cherished the dream of a United Kathiawar, and Sardar Patel made this dream a reality.

The pattern of integration has proved to be highly popular and within two months of the formation of Saurashtra, several other Union, *e.g.*, Himachal Pradesh embracing the Simla States, the Vindhya Pradesh embracing Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand States, the Matsya Union of four Salute States of Alwar, Bharatpur, Dholpur and Karauli, the Rajasthan Union of States including Udaipur, Kotah, Bundi, Jhalawar, Dungarpur and others, and the biggest of all, the Union of Malwa with a large number of Central India States including first class States like Gwalior and Indore, have materialised. Recently the Union of East Punjab States including Patiala has also been established. The speed with which these Unions have got formed shows the universal appeal which this sagacious suggestion on the part of the States Minister has made both to the people and the Princes. At one stroke it solves the problem of consolidation and democratisation at one and the same time.

The formation of fully responsible Governments in the other States which are to continue as separate entities is also nearing completion. Kashmir is already being governed by a popular Ministry under the inspiring guidance of Sheikh Abdullah and this is bound to go a clear verdict by the Kashmir people in favour of final accession to India. With an amicable settlement with Hyderabad, which must follow in course of time, the process of consolidation of Indian States as visualised by Sardar Patel in his Press Conference on January 29, 1948 will reach its final phase and there is every reason to expect that as he promised, the process will be completed well before the new constitution, formed by the Indian Constituent Assembly, comes into effect.

The work of Sardar Patel as the States' Minister is by far the most distinguished and it will ever be remembered by posterity as one of his greatest achievements.

SARDAR PATEL AND HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Sardar Patel was one of principal associates of Mahatma Gandhi in the Khilafat Movement and shared his views on Hindu-Muslim unity in full. The clearest expression of his views on the subject is found in his presidential address at the 1931 session of the Congress. There he gave expression to his staunch belief that in an independent India communal questions can only be solved on strictly national lines. As one belonging to the majority community, his attitude is marked by a spirit of generosity. "As a Hindu," he declared, "I adopt my predecessor's formula and present the minorities with a Swadeshi fountain-pen and paper, and let them write out their

demands. And I should endorse them. I know that it is the quickest method. But it requires courage on the part of the Hindus. What we want is a heart unity, not patched-up paper unity that will break under the slightest strain." Sardar Patel has throughout been very consistent in his attitude towards this problem. Speaking on the 'Quit India' resolution of 1942, he asked the British to hand over power even to the Muslim League and quit. Where, on the one hand, his standard of sacrifice on the part of the majority is the same as in 1930, he has also not budged an inch from his stand on nationalism. Referring to Mr. Jinnah's claim that the League be recognised as the sole representative of Muslims, he said : "To concede this claim is for the Congress to commit suicide in the hope of being reborn a Hindu organisation."

Sardar Patel has stood equally firm on his stress of heart-unity instead of mere paper patch-up unity, so much so that in spite of his fundamental faith in the unity of India, he agreed to the division of the country in two sovereign States when he found that a United India would be a camp of two perpetually hostile and warring communities making all progress impossible. As a matter of fact, the moment Sardar Patel realised that the appeasement of the Muslim League was yielding no results, and was instead stiffening its attitude all the more, he of all the other Congress leaders took a realistic view of the problem, and started giving a befitting reply to the League intransigence.

His forthright declaration, on August 11, 1947, is a candid expression of his original solution of the minority problem on national lines.

Speaking on weightage for minorities, he said : "In dealing with our domestic problems, there could not be in the future any more separate electorates or weightages and special treatment. Every community must get what is its due."

PATEL AND THE PROLETARIAT

Where the real sympathies of Sardar Patel lie, with the underdog or with the privileged few, has been a subject of great controversy in the leftist quarters. Many of the strong measures taken by him while in power in dealing with matters of party discipline or labour strikes at inopportune moments, have been taken to indicate tendencies towards the support of the privileged few. Even his very sound advice to the ratings of the Royal Indian Navy to call-off their violent strike last year was interpreted by some and specially by the Communists as an act of sabotage against a popular cause. All that is grossly unfair to Sardar Patel. Sardar Patel is certainly not a marxist, nor is he a stooge of the capitalists. Instead of taking particular instances and explaining his stand towards each, let us have a glimpse of the very fibre the Sardar is made up of. That will demonstrate where he actually stands.

Born and brought up on a village farm, nobody in the higher ranks of the Congress can claim that genuine affinity with the sons of the soil which Sardar Patel can. The short period he spent in England for his studies in law could not touch the Sardar's real metal at all and he came back to India the same sturdy former both in living and outlook. His first contact with

Gandhiji brought him to his real field, the village, and Bardoli saw the best of him in this sphere. Who can doubt the sincerity ringing in each and every word of his rare peroration before Bardoli Kisans. "If anyone is fit to walk with his head erect on this earth, it is the peasant. He is the producer, the others are parasites. But what a sorry plight he has been reduced to. The whole world depends on you two, the agriculturist and the labourer, and yet you are the worst abused people on earth. I am grieved at the woeful state of helplessness to which you have been reduced.....I feel deeply ashamed and humiliated at your plight. I shall feel myself blessed and all my labours fulfilled when I see you come into your own and walk erect like men."

Commenting on the extremely soft corner that the Sardar has for the peasants, the late Shri Mahadeo Desai said: "He (Sardar Patel) believes with Voltaire that the present-day politicians have discovered in their fine politics the art of causing those to die of hunger who, by cultivating the earth, give the means of life to others, and he burns with rage when he talks of the system which has made the peasant what he is and of those responsible for the system."

BARDOLI SATYAGRAHA

[Gujarat was in every sense Sardar Patel's field of work during the formative period of his political career. In 1918 he organised the struggle in Kaira district as lieutenant of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1920-21 when Gandhiji launched the non-co-operation movement, Sardar Patel was responsible for organising it in Bardoli. But it was in 1928 that the real test of his leadership came. The Government raised land revenue by 25 per cent without there being any justification for the rise. Sardar Patel advised the peasants not to pay and himself led the satyagraha. In his addresses to the Bardoli peasants, the Sardar reached the high-water mark of his eloquence. He moved from village to village and spoke to the peasants in Gujarati, which it is quite impossible to effectively render into English on account of its striking wealth of idiom and pithy phrase, which at once aroused the audience to laughter and moved them to tears. Full text of these addresses is not available. The extracts given here have been taken from press reports. They show the powerful personality of the speaker quite unmistakably. Sardar Vallabhbhai organised the struggle with such success that Bardoli became a symbol of militant politics.]

As I told you last time I addressed to H.E. the Governor a letter asking for an impartial tribunal. I have had a reply which is no reply. My letter, I am told, has been sent to the Revenue Department for consideration and disposal. When they will have finished considering the letter, we do not know ; neither can we wait for their decision. If the Government had said that pending consideration of my letter they had resolved to suspend the collection operations and asked us also to adjourn our conference, I should gladly have complied. But

now I have simply to await your decision. Since I met you last time I have looked up the law to see if in spite of being iniquitous the orders of enhancement satisfied the letter of the day. I have failed to see that they are even within the law. They are in contravention of Section 107 of L. R. Code. The settlement officer had based his report on the existing system, and though I have no end of things to say about his report—the principal being that he never troubled himself to visit the villages and hold conference with the villagers, as is at present being done in Olpad taluka—I must say that he had adhered to the old system. The Settlement Commission adopted a different principle and regrouped the villages on that principle. In the event of such an alteration Government are bound to issue a fresh notification, but in their hurry to put the revision settlement in force they did no such thing. In the circumstances I would in all humility advise you to refuse payment of the whole assessment so long as the Government do not come to terms. You must bear clearly in mind that except your capacity for suffering and grim determination you have nothing to fight Government's brute strength with. The mightiest tyrant must bend if people are determined to put up with suffering.

The question today is not of a few lakhs of rupees, but it is a question of self-respect. It is a fundamental principle of Government that there can be no taxation without representation. They should do nothing without having had your views in the matter. You have to resist the arbitrary system of fixing the revenue according to Government's own whims and fancies.

For this you will have to be self-possessed, resourceful and patient. Government will try your

strength in various ways, offer various inducements, use insidious means to bring about a division in your ranks. But you will have to adhere to your principle of refusal to pay at all costs and hardships.

I have suggested a clause in the resolution to the effect that the fight will go on, until Government appoint an impartial tribunal or revoke the orders of enhancement. Not that we have any doubt that the enhancement is arbitrary, unjust and oppressive, but if we can make Government accept this vital principle of an independent tribunal, it is more than any material gain, temporary or permanent.

I have nothing more to say. Do what you do with eyes open, with God as witness and fully counting the cost. It is possible that Government might pick up the leading men amongst you first to set an example, Government might first confiscate the lands of those who move the resolution today. If you are sure that these things will leave you unshaken, take up and fight the good fight.

II

A People at War with Government

For the brunt will have to be borne by them (women). They will have to see their dear cattle seized before their very eyes, they will have to put up with the repeated attachment parties, and unless they are accustomed to take these things as a matter of course, they might easily betray you. I therefore want as many women to attend these meetings as possible.

You must change your ways now, you will have to create an entirely different atmosphere. Have done with your wedding festivities as soon as possible. A people at war with a mighty Govern-

ment cannot afford to indulge in these pastimes. From tomorrow you might have to keep your doors closed and locked and betake to the fields only to return home in the evening. Government will try to raise people from amongst you to help in the work of attachment, you will see to it that they get none. Throw off your lethargy and apathy. You have earned a reputation which you have yet to do much to deserve. Now the die is cast and there is no turning back. You have to vindicate Gandhiji's choice of your taluka as the scene of his first experiment in mass Civil Disobedience. You were about to fight freedom's battle for India, you have now to fight a smaller battle and prove that you were capable of fighting the bigger one. I am coming to your village straight from the conference because I want to reach as many of you as early as possible. I want you now to be on the queue. The Government will leave no stone unturned, will not scruple to use any means, fair or foul, to create a breach in your ranks. I beseech you to forget your personal differences and petty quarrels. I want you to put an end to your factions and disputes, and to make friends of even your bitterest enemies. Only that way can you present a united front. I know that some of you are afraid of your lands being confiscated. What is confiscation? Will they take the lands away to England? The worst that can happen is that the lands might be transferred to Government in their books, but if you are united you can defy anyone to come forward to cultivate those lands. And rest assured that when you are ready to allow all your lands to be confiscated, the whole of Gujerat will be at your back.

Organize your village and you will set an example to others. The campaign has begun. Every village must now be an armed camp. The

news from every village must reach the taluka headquarters daily and punctually, and every instruction from the headquarters must promptly be obeyed. Discipline and organization mean half the battle. Government have at the most one *Patel* and one *Talati* to every village. For us every adult in the village must be a *volunteer*.

III

Inoculation with Fearlessness

I see that these 15 days have taught you to cast off fear from your hearts. You are, however, not completely free from it. Two annas in the rupee is still there. Shake it off. Why need you fear? No civilized Government can govern without the consent of the governed. At the present moment they govern because your eyes are blindfolded, you are deluded into the belief that they are keeping you in peace and prosperity. It is not a reign of peace but a reign of fear. You have lost the capacity of righteous indignation against wrong. The absence of it is cowardice. I go about in your villages at dead of night, sometimes without even once being asked 'Halt! Who goes there?'. Ravishankar tells me with surprise that in these villages not a dog barks and not a buffalo flourishes its horns at a stranger. It is your quiescence that has been your undoing. I want to inoculate you with fearlessness. I want to galvanize you into life. I miss in your eyes the flash of indignation against wrong.

Where is there another so honest as a peasant, so free from bad habits and vices, so guileless, so God fearing, living on the sweat of his brow? Why should such a man fear any mortal man? A

seeming contradiction, is it not? A man who is so pure and guileless cannot but be fearless.

What is this fear of a 'will-o'-the-wisp'? What is this Government? Has any one seen it? I have never seen it. Does Government mean the *Mamlatdar*, or the *Talati*, or the *Patel*, or is it a combination of these all? There is no individual called the sarkar. Why then should we magnify individual amaldars and make sarkars of them? He who stands by the side of the ryot in the hour of his need is an amaldar, all the rest are hawaldars (petty peons).

Government has, like a wild elephant, run amok. It thinks that it can trample anything and everything under its feet. Even so thinks the mad elephant priding itself on having trampled in the past even lions and tigers to death, and scorning the little gnat defying him. I am teaching the little gnat today to let the elephant go on in his mad career, and then get into his trunk at the opportune moment. The gnat need not fear the elephant. The elephant can never trample it to death, but the gnat can certainly prove formidable to the elephant.

What is a little potsherd before a big pot? But it need not fear the pot, for a sherd can break the pot to pieces, but the pot cannot break the sherd.

IV

Deserters deserve Pity not Anger

It is not for you to give vent to wrath. Your pledge restricts you to non-violence, and non-violence excludes anger. The defection of these unfortunate brethren should serve to stiffen your resolve and to warn you for the future. You must

not be angry with those two friends who fell a prey to the official machinations. They deserve your pity rather than anger. It is no use exercising yourselves on the things that you could not help. It is a dirty thing, but do not try to probe it. If you do it, you will make your hands dirty. Surely you did not imagine that there would be no seceders in the movement. You seem to fear that if you let these people go scot free, demoralisation will set in. If those who have signed the pledge break it with eyes open, how long can you stop them? I beseech you not to take any stern measures against them. Find out if there are any more black sheep among you and persuade them to pay up sooner rather than later, if they are so inclined. Whatever happens, don't be alarmed. Let the *Mahalkari* chuckle over his precious gains. He will soon find his occupation gone.

Remember the law of nature. You all know that you cannot have those heaps of cotton until a few cotton seeds are buried under the earth and destroyed. But they are reborn again with a larger life. And hardship and misery are not new things to you. Who puts up with heat, cold, rain, and all the inclemencies of weather, as the tiller of the soil does? Who puts up with the mosquitoes and other pests of our countryside as the agriculturist does? I assure you, Government cannot inflict on you any greater hardship than you are already enduring. Go through it all with a will and a cheer and everything will be well in the end.

The Government is trying its level best to spread as much poison in the taluka as possible through our own men. These men are ours, but beware of them. Like thieves at night they are trying to create breaches in our ranks. They are always on the look out for our weaknesses, they

flourish on them. The drunkard tempts the drunkard amongst us with drink, the bully intimidates the timid amongst us with all sorts of phantasms and fears. Beware of them and their falsehoods. Don't go within miles of them. And even if a handful from amongst you fall victim, to their wiles, don't be alarmed, don't flinch from your resolve. Even a victorious army has its casualty list and has its deserters. If blacklegs are discovered, understand that it is so much dirt and stain washed away. Challenge the Government to take up your land and carry it, if they can, to England. Challenge them to surround the taluka with machine guns and aeroplanes. We have no armed force, but we have a better and a purer force to pit against it—the force of Truth, the force of our allegiance to our pledge.

V

Signs of Slavery

Sisters, I do not like those signs of slavery on your hands and feet. Your heavy brass ornaments accumulate a lot of dirt, produce all sorts of skin diseases and interfere with your free movement. You must shed them. Look at those clean clad happy girls of your own community sitting opposite, singing Satyagraha songs. Would you not love to look like them? (A voice: Why not?) They bathe every day and wash their clothes. They spin and have their own clothes. (Another voice: They go to the ashram and learn songs there. We should love our women also to do the same.) I am glad you understand the difference. Now that you have joined this movement you must be proper soldiers. These foreign clothes ill become soldiers. You have strong hands and feet like those Khadi-clad girls.

Why should you not have wheels from the ashram and start spinning? Within a few days you can have enough for your clothes. And you may not touch drink. Upto now you have remained aloof, not heeding our advice. But now that you have joined the movement, you ought to have the necessary fitness by abstaining from drink.

VI

Producers and Parasites

If anyone is fit to walk with his head erect on this earth, it is the peasant. He is the producer, the others are parasites. But what a sorry plight he has been reduced to! The whole world depends on you two, the agriculturist and the labourer, and yet you are the worst abused people on earth. I am grieved at the woeful state of helplessness to which you have been reduced. You shudder at the sight of a worthless Government peon who can compel you to do his bidding. The Government taxes you according to its sweet will and you have no voice in it. There is a soil rate, and a water rate, a special irrigation rate and a special subsoil water rate; even the improvements that you make at your cost and by your labour are taxed. You toil in the fields even as your own bullocks do from morning until evening, in biting cold, in scorching heat and drenching rain. You grapple with scorpions and wade through mud and raise a crop of rice to feed yourselves and your children. But even that rice must be taxed. Why are you so fear-stricken? Why are you so inarticulate? I feel deeply ashamed and humiliated at your plight. I shall feel myself blessed and all my labours fulfilled when I see you come into your own and walk erect like men.

That you who have the courage to risk your lives in climbing the toddy and the palm trees, shooting straight up to the sky without a branch or a stump to afford a foothold, that a daring people like you should be afraid of people who fight shy of that adventure is incomprehensible, is intolerable. Who ordained that the Government should be the proprietor of the soil and the cultivator a mere tenant? But it is on that theory that a land tax is imposed on him which sucks him absolutely dry. And to complete the tragedy, Government have the support of our educated classes in that bleeding process.

VII

Truth and Non-Violence

It is a struggle based essentially on truth and non-violence; we must not do anything in resentment or anger. It is a sign of weakness. Our strength lies in cheerfully going through all sufferings that may be imposed on us. I can understand your refusing to assist the officers in *Japli* work. In fact it is your duty to do so, but do not refuse them the ordinary amenities of life. They must get whatever they want at market rates.

I have read the Collector's interview given to a representative of the "Times of India." I have been moving about from village to village for the last two and a half months, and I have not met one man who is willing to pay this unjust tax. On the contrary, since the arrival of the Collector I have received several reports of illegitimate and undue pressure being brought on the people, especially Parsi khatedars, who unfortunately happen to be canteen keepers; and the Excise officials' assistance is being

invoked to bring pressure on them. There is hardly a single Parsi khatedar who has paid his dues willingly, and none of them is such as would refrain from paying for fear of violence and fire, nor have they any social relations with the people. In spite of all attempts at creating a division—and therein lies Government's hope—I have no doubt that you will disappoint them, and notwithstanding provocation, do nothing that would bring discredit to the movement. Let them break open your house and your locks, let them take away all your belongings. Suffer them to do it smilingly. Do not lose your temper. Let them do what they like. If there are any people in the taluka who want to pay but who hesitate to do so for fear of fire and violence, I ask them to come to me and I shall take them to the Mamlatdar myself for payment of their assessment, and I shall assure them of all the protection they may need. But I am sure there is none such. No movement based on coercion or terrorism can endure for such a long time against a Government with limitless means of terrorism at its disposal. It is my hope, and I am sure you will help me to fulfil it, to render all police in this taluka perfectly useless by your peaceful behaviour. Render them idle and they will soon go back.

Government wants disturbance, wants to provoke us into violence. Drums and conches have nothing to do with the question of revenue. Let us not quarrel with their notifications, they do not harm us, they cannot affect the issue. Refuse to be embittered if they try to provoke you. Refuse to submit if they try to crush you. The Government has lost its balance. The iron can afford to fling thousands of sparks, not so the hammer. If the hammer got hot it would burn up its own handle. A Government may wax as red-hot as it likes. The

people (the hammer) cannot afford to do so, and if they retain their equanimity, they are bound to cool the Government and beat it into submission and shape.

VIII

Commencement of Sacrifice

Our struggle has now reached a second stage, and I have nothing more to teach you as regards ways and weapons of our non-violent struggle. I am asking all my co-workers to stop speech-making, and leave it to me, if at all it is necessary at any place. I wish you to stop singing battle songs, as it is now time to sing only the praise of God even as these sisters have done this evening. Our sacrifice has commenced, let it be pure and spotless. We have now only to offer ourselves as spotless, willing victims. The Government is in a temper, and determined to carry out a policy of ruthless repression. High officials who never come in real touch with the people are exasperated, and are not able to understand why their subordinates are not succeeding in the task of persuading or terrorising people into submission and payment. They, therefore, distrust them. They have not the faintest idea of the difficulties or of the plight of these subordinates. I hear reports of a large number of *Talatis* expecting orders of transfer from this taluka. Reports of probable arrests and prosecutions are in the air. All these are indications of the temper of the Government at the present moment. It is therefore our duty to be absolutely calm and collected, and to give them no chance of putting us in the wrong.

Let them capture your buffaloes and other property. They cannot capture your souls. The

infatuation for possession is no good. How much land does a man require? The Musalman not more than two cubits and a half and Hindus that much only for a couple of hours. God is always with the right.

IX

Unique Honour

Bardoli is having a unique honour. Armed policemen marching, and men with rifles on horse-back parading through its streets. The Government which simply ignored you a little while ago is now running up and down your villages in these busy days of the year. The District Superintendent of Police also honours you with a visit in this scorching summer; it is no small thing. Is it a small honour that in a taluka like yours where processes of distraint have been unknown for years, three special officers should have been appointed for the purpose of attaching your property? Is it a small honour that special motor lorries should have to be requisitioned from Surat to carry property seized from your houses? It is due to Bardoli that petty peons and Pathans for whom a bullock-cart was a luxury are now having joy-rides in Government motor-cars.

X

Honour of the Whole of India

If there are any amongst you who feel any misgivings, or are afraid of the fire of repression, they had better go on a pilgrimage or betake themselves to some hill station or breezy seaside place while there is yet time. For let there be no mistake in the matter. As agriculturists you know

that the dark rain-laden clouds so welcome to your sight come only after you have passed through the parching heat of the summer months of *Chaitra* and *Vaishakha* and descend only after we have had terrific storm and lightning and peals of thunder which rend the skies. Similarly Government is not going to do you justice until it has put you through the fire. It will try to cajole you, if you are willing to be cajoled. But if you resist its advances, it has its iron fist ready with which to descend upon you. For understand, the issue with Government is not merely one of losing a few lakhs of rupees of land revenue. It can raise a crore of rupees today, if it wishes, by arbitrary taxation. But it is afraid, and rightly too that if we win the battle, the whole of India may do tomorrow what Bardoli is doing today. Similarly you have to realise on your part that it is not merely yourselves that you represent but that you hold in your hand the honour of the whole of India.

CONGRESS PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, 1931

[The nation recognised Sardar Patel's work in Bardoli by electing him to the Presidential gaddi of the Indian National Congress in 1931. The peasant became the leader of the politicians.

The Karachi Session of the Congress was held after the signing of what is known as the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. The Civil Disobedience movement had been called off and officially the Congress was at peace with the British. But a storm was intrinsically brewing in the political horizon, and the Presidential address no doubt clearly showed it.]

"Friends,—Let me commence my brief address with respectful condolence to Shrimati Sarup Rani Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal, and the other members of the family on the loss they have sustained in Pandit Motilalji's death. I know that their sorrow has been greatly relieved by the knowledge that it is shared by a whole nation. Motilalji's help at this juncture was a necessity which we all and above all Gandhiji felt whilst the delicate negotiations in Delhi were going on. This loss came upon the nation when the tears had hardly dried over the death of Maulana Mohammed Ali. Though unfortunately the late Maulana had differences with us, his services to the country as a great patriot and a brave man who never concealed what he believed, could never be forgotten. I tender my respectful condolence to the Begum Saheba, Maulana Shaukat Ali and the whole family. And with these two I would couple those nameless heroes, who unknown to fame and never caring for it, laid down their lives in the non-violent struggle during past 12 months. May their souls rest in peace and may

their lives chasten us and spur us to greater sacrifice and greater effort for the cause for which they died!

You have called a simple farmer to the highest office to which any Indian can aspire. I am conscious that your choice of me as first servant is not so much for what little I might have done, but it is the recognition of the amazing sacrifice made by Gujarat. Out of your generosity you have singled out Gujarat for the honour. But in truth every province did its utmost during the year of the greatest national awakening that we have known in modern times. And thanks be to God that the awakening was a call to self-purification.

Mass Non-Violence no Longer Dream of a Visionary

Though there have been aberrations, it is a fact beyond challenge that India has given a singular proof to the world that mass non-violence is no longer the idle dream of a visionary or a mere human longing. It is a solid fact capable of infinite possibilities for a humanity which is groaning, for want of faith, beneath the weight of violence of which it has almost made a fetish. The greatest proof that our movement was non-violent lies in the fact that the peasants falsified the fears of our worst sceptics. They were described as very difficult to organize for non-violent action and it is they who stood the test with a bravery and an endurance that was beyond all expectations. Women and children too contributed their great share in the fight. They responded to the call by instinct and played a part which we are too near the event adequately to measure. And I think it would not be at all wrong to give them the bulk of the credit

for preservation of non-violence and the consequent success of the movement. Looked at in the light of non-violence our struggle is a world struggle and it is a matter of great satisfaction that the nations of the earth, especially the United States of America, have heartened us by their sympathy.

British Army, an Army of Occupation

The recent settlement, however, renders it unnecessary to dwell at greater length upon this heroic period in the national life. Your Working Committee has entered into the settlement in anticipation of your approval. You are now invited formally to endorse it. The Committee having accepted it as your accredited representatives it is not, take it, open to you to repudiate it, but it is open to you to pass a vote of no-confidence in the present executive and appoint better agents. But whilst it is but meet that I should draw your attention to the constitutional position, I have no doubt whatsoever that you will endorse the settlement which I hold to be perfectly honourable for both the parties. Had we not accepted the settlement we should have put ourselves in the wrong and thereby undone the effect of the suffering of the past year. Indeed, we had always claimed, as Satyagrahis must claim, to be ready and eager for peace. When therefore the way seemed to be open for peace, we took it. In view of the clear demand on the part of the British Indian Delegation at the Round Table Conference for full responsibility, and in view of the British parties having accepted the position and in view of the appeal made to the Congress by the Premier, the Viceroy and many of our distinguished countrymen, the Working Committee thought that if an honourable truce could be arranged and if it was

open to the Congress to press without any reservation for what it considered to be the best for the country, the Congress should, if invited, take part in the Conference and attempt to reach an agreed solution of the constitutional issue. If we failed in the attempt and there was no way open but that of suffering, then it was a privilege of which no power on earth could deprive us. Under the constitution clause of the settlement it is open to us to press for Purna Swaraj, to ask for complete control over our defence forces, foreign affairs, finance, fiscal policy and the like. There would be safeguards or reservations, or as the late Pandit Motilalji called them, adjustments, conceived in our own interest. When power passed from one to the other by agreement, there are always safeguards in the interest of the party in need of reparation or help. The continued exploitation of India for close on two centuries renders it necessary for us to seek assistance in several respects from external sources. This we would gladly take from British, if she is willing to give. Thus we would need military skill, and there is no reason why we may not receive English assistance in this direction. I have taken only one telling illustration out of others that may be suggested. The defence safeguard may therefore be the retention of British officers, or as some would say, even privates, but we could never let our defence be controlled by the British. We must have the full power to make mistakes. We may gratefully receive British advice, never dictation. The fact is that the British army in India is an army of occupation. Defence is a misnomer. Frankly, the army is for defending British interests and British men and women against any internal uprising. I cannot recall a single instance in which the Indian army was required for the protection of India to fight a foreign power. True, there have

been expeditions on the Frontier, wars with Afghanistan. British historians have taught us that these were wars more of aggression rather than of defence. We must not therefore be frightened by the bogey of foreign designs upon India. In my opinion, if we need an army, we certainly do not need the octopus we are daily bleeding to support. If the Congress has its way, the army will suffer immediate reduction to its desirable proportion.

Nor can we divide financial control with the British Government. The nation cannot grow to its full height if it has not exclusive control over its finance.

Again we have been taught to think that our civil administration will be inefficient and corrupt if we give up the able assistance of highly paid British civilians. The administrative powers that the Congress has exhibited during recent years and the fact of its having on an ever-increasing scale drawn to its assistance some of the best young men and women either without pay or on a mere pittance should sufficiently dispose of the fear of corruption or inefficiency. It would be too great a strain upon our poor purse to have to pay by way of insurance against corruption a premium out of all proportion to the highest possible estimate of corruption that may ever take place. It will, therefore, be necessary if India is to come to her own, to demand a heavy reduction in the Civil Service expenditure and a consequent reduction in the emoluments of the Civil Service.

Charges against India Unjust

We have claimed that many of the charges laid upon India are wholly unjust. We have never suggested repudiation of a single obligation, but we

have asked and must continue to ask for an impartial investigation into the debts against us wherever we cannot agree.

There is no receding from the Lahore resolution of Complete Independence. This Independence does not mean, was not intended to mean, a churlish refusal to associate with Britain or any other power. Independence therefore does not exclude the possibility of equal partnership for mutual benefit and dissolvable at the will of either party. If India is to reach her Independence through consultation and agreements, it is reasonable to suppose that there is a strong body of opinion in the country to the effect that before a partnership could possibly be conceived there must be a period of complete dissociation. I do not belong to that school. It is, as I think, a sign of weakness and of disbelief in human nature.

Federation is a fascinating idea. But it introduces new embarrassments. Princes will not listen to severance. But if they will come in the true spirit it will be a great gain. Their association must not be to impede the progress of democracy. I hope therefore that they will not take up an uncompromising attitude that may be wholly inconsistent with the spirit of freedom. I wish they would without any pressure give us an earnest of their desire to march abreast of the time-spirit. Surely the fundamental rights of their subjects should be guaranteed as of the rest of the inhabitants of India. All the inhabitants of Federated India should enjoy some common elementary rights. And if there are rights there must be a common court to give relief from any encroachment upon them. Nor can it be too much to expect that the subjects of the states should be to an extent directly represented on the Federal Legislature.

As regards Burma press censorship has rendered it impossible for us to know the true situation there. Whether Burma should be separated from India or should be part of a Free India is for the Burmese alone to decide. But it is our concern, indeed, it is the world's concern, to see that all sides are heard. It is well-known that there is a unionist party in Burma. It is as much entitled to freedom of opinion as the separation party. If therefore the information given to the Congress that unionist opinion is strangled be true, the injustice must be resisted. The proposition that there should be a referendum of Burmese opinion, seems to me to be eminently reasonable.

Communal Unity

But before all else comes the question of Hindu-Muslim, or rather communal, unity. The position of the Congress was defined at Lahore. Let me recite the resolution here :

"In view of the lapse of the Nehru Report it is unnecessary to declare the policy of the Congress regarding communal questions, the Congress believing that in an independent India, communal questions can only be solved on strictly national lines. But as the Sikhs in particular and Muslims and other minorities in general had expressed dissatisfaction over the solution of communal question proposed in the Nehru Report, the Congress assures the Sikhs, Muslims and other minorities that no solution thereof in any future constitution can be acceptable to the Congress that does not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned."

Therefore, the Congress can be no party to any constitution which does not contain a solution of the communal question, that is not designed to

satisfy the respective parties. As a Hindu I adopt my predecessor's formula and present the minorities with a Swadeshi fountain-pen and paper and let them write out their demands. And I should endorse them. I know that is the quickest method. But it requires courage on the part of the Hindus. What we want is a heart unity, not patched-up paper unity that will break under the slightest strain. That unity can only come when the majority takes courage in both the hands and is prepared to change place with the minority. This would be the highest wisdom. Whether the unity is reached that way or any other, it is becoming plainer day after day that it is useless to attend any conference unless that unity is achieved. The conference can give us an agreement between the British and us, it can perhaps help us to come nearer to the Princes, but it can never enable us to achieve unity. That must be hammered into shape by ourselves. The Congress must leave no stone unturned to realise this much-desired end.

It must be clear to all of us that the Congress can be useful for attaining Purna Swaraj only to the extent that it has gained power. The past twelve months have undoubtedly given it a power which he who runs may see. But it is not enough and can be easily frittered away by hasty action or by pride. He is a spendthrift who lives on his capital. We must therefore add to our power. One way to do so is on our part to fulfil to the letter the conditions of the settlement. The other is to consolidate our gains. I therefore propose to devote a few lines to this part of our activity.

Wear Khaddar

We have made much headway in the matter of the boycott of foreign cloth. It is a right as well as

duty. Without it the impoverished millions of India must continue to starve. For if cheap foreign cloth continues to be dumped down in the villages of India, the Charkha cannot flourish. Foreign cloth must therefore be banished from the land. It is dear, even if it could be obtained free. The millions who starve, do so because they have no work during the off-season. It is want of easy employment in their own villages that leads to starvation. Incessant propaganda is necessary to rid the country of chronic unemployment which has become second nature with our peasantry. The best propaganda is to do sacrificial spinning ourselves and wear Khadi. The All-India Spinners' Association has done much valuable work. But it is for the Congress to create the Spinning and the Khaddar atmosphere. This to my mind is the best and the most effective propaganda of Boycott.

It has been suggested that the argument against foreign cloth applies to indigenous mill cloth. This is true to an extent. But our mills do not produce all the cloth we need. For years to come they may continue to supply the balance that may be required over and above hand-spun cloth. But even our mills may prove a hindrance, if they compete with Khaddar or resort to questionable devices to push their wares. Fortunately many mills are patriotically working in co-operation with the Congress and are beginning to appreciate the virtue of Khaddar in the interest of the toiling millions. But I can certainly say that if our mills unpatriotically hurt Khaddar instead of complementing it, they must face an opposition somewhat similar to that against foreign cloth.

The foreign cloth merchants will do well to bear the Congress attitude in mind in this regard.

Foreign cloth boycott is a permanent thing, not conceived as a political weapon but as an economic and social measure of permanent value for the welfare of the masses. These merchants, therefore, if they will look into the future and think of their country, will do well to give up their foreign cloth trade. Everything possible is being done to help them but some very big sacrifice on their part is essential.

English, Japanese and other foreign merchants will, I hope, not misunderstand the Congress attitude. If they will help India, they will deny themselves the Indian trade in foreign cloth. They have other markets and other enterprises.

Picketing

This brings me to picketing. This has not been and cannot be given up. I give below the relevant clause of the Settlement :

“Picketing shall be unaggressive and it shall not involve coercion, intimidation, restraint, hostile demonstration, obstruction to the public, or any offence under the ordinary law, and if and when any of these methods is employed in any place, the practice of picketing in that place will be suspended ”

Picketing is a common law right. But you will observe that within the limits prescribed, it is not only inoffensive but also highly educative. Its function is gentle persuasion, never coercion or violent restraint on liberty. I use the adjective “violent” advisedly. The restraining force of public opinion there always will be. It is healthy, elevating, and conducive to the growth of liberty as distinguished from license. Non-violent picketing is designed to create public opinion, an atmosphere which should become irresistible. This can best be carried out by women.

I hope therefore that they will continue the marvelous work begun by them and earn the eternal gratitude of the nation and, what is more, the blessings of the starving millions.

In this connection let me say a few words regarding boycott of British goods. This idea is almost as old as the Congress. We know that after the advent of Gandhiji on the political platform, boycott of British goods was replaced by that of foreign, not only British, cloth. He interpreted it in terms of economic and social uplift, whereas the boycott of the British goods as such is a political and punitive measure. This was effectively employed during the recent hurricane campaign. Now that there is at least temporary peace, and we seek to reach our goal through consultation and conference, we must withdraw the political weapon. We cannot be sitting at the friendly conference table and making designs outside to hurt British interests. to starvation.

Whilst therefore we must for the time being withdraw British goods' boycott, we must intensify Swadeshi which is the birthright of every nation. Whatever we produce in our country we must encourage to the exclusion of foreign, whether British or other. This is the condition of the national growth. Thus we must encourage and carry on intensive propaganda on behalf of the indigenous insurance companies, banking, shipping and the like. We may not belittle them on the ground of their inferiority or neglect or dearness. Only by wide use and helpful criticism may we make them cheaper and better.

There is much loose talk about equality of treatment. What is equality of treatment between giant and dwarf, between elephant and ant? If

Lord Inchcape with his fabulous wealth and resources claimed equal rights with Seth Narotam Morarji of lamented memory, it would be a travesty of equality. It will be time enough to talk of equality of treatment after Narotamdas's successors have made some little approach to Lord Inchcape's resources. Equality of treatment in the case of hopeless unequals ought to mean raising the less favoured up to the level of the most favoured. Thus equality of treatment for suppressed classes on the part of the so-called superior classes means raising the former to the latter's level, the latter sacrificing their substance and stooping to conquer. In relation to the British we have hitherto occupied a position in some respects lower even than the suppressed classes. Protection of Indian industries and enterprise to the exclusion of British or foreign, is a condition of our national existence even under a state of partnership. Protection within even the British Commonwealth is no new-fangled notion. It is in vogue in the Dominions to the extent necessary for their growth.

Boycott of Intoxicating Drinks an Economic Necessity

Just as boycott of foreign cloth is an economic necessity for the sake of the starving millions, boycott of intoxicating drinks and drugs is a necessity for the moral welfare of the nation. The idea of total prohibition was born before its political effect was thought of. The Congress conceived it as a measure of self-purification. Even if the Government earmarked the revenue from this traffic for purely Prohibition purposes, our picketing of these shops would continue, no doubt subject to the same severe restrictions as in the case of foreign cloth. I invite the Government during the transition stage to anticipate the verdict of the national legislature

and not merely tolerate picketing of the two things, foreign cloth, drink and drugs, but make, if they will, common cause with the nation. But whether they will or not, we cannot rest so long as there is a yard of foreign cloth entering the country or a single liquor shop corrupting our misguided countrymen.

One word regarding salt. The salt raids must stop. Defiance of salt laws for the sake of disobedience must stop. But the poor, living in the neighbourhood of salt areas, are free to make and sell salt within that neighbourhood. The Salt Tax is not gone, it is true. In view of the likelihood of the Congress participating in the Conference, we may not press for the immediate repeal of the tax, which is bound to come very soon. But the poorest on whose behalf the campaign was undertaken are now virtually free from the tax. I hope that no traders will seek to take an undue advantage of the relaxation.

Not interested in Legislative Honours

The foregoing paragraph perhaps shows you how uninterested I am in many things that interest the intelligentsia. I am not interested in loaves and fishes or legislative honours. The peasantry do not understand these, they are little affected by them. I believe that Gandhiji's eleven points mean the substance of Swaraj. That which does not satisfy them is no Swaraj. Whilst I would respect the rights of landlords, Rajas, Maharajas and others to the extent that they do not hurt the sweating millions, my interest lies in helping the down-trodden to rise from their state and be on a level with the tallest in the land. Thank God, the gospel of Truth and Non-violence has given these an inkling of their dignity

and the power they possess. Much still remains to be done. But let us make up our minds that we exist for them, not they for us. Let us shed our petty rivalries and jealousies and religious feuds, and let everyone realise that the Congress represents and exists for the toiling millions and that it will become an irresistible power working not for greed or power but for the sake of common humanity.

Self-purification Necessary

There is one part of the constructive programme which I have not yet dealt with ; that is the all-important work of removing untouchability. It is no use tinkering with the problem. The recent heroic struggle on the part of the nation would have been more glorious if Hindus had purged Hinduism of this evil. But heroism or glory apart, no Swaraj would be worth having without this supreme act of self-purification, and even if Swaraj is won whilst this stain continues to blacken Hinduism, it would be as insecure as Swaraj without a complete boycott of foreign cloth.

In conclusion, I may not forget our brethren overseas. Their lot in S. Africa, in East Africa and in the other parts of the world is still hanging in the balance. Deenabandhu Andrews is happily in South Africa helping our countrymen. Pandit Hridaya Nath Kunzru has specialized in the Indian question in East Africa. The only consolation the Congress can give is to assure them of its sympathy. They know that their lot must automatically improve to the extent that we approach our goal. In your name I would appeal to the Governments concerned to treat with consideration the members of a nation which is bound at a very early date to enter upon her heritage and which means ill to no nation on

earth. We ask them to extend to our nationals the same treatment they would have us, when we are free, to extend to theirs. This is surely not asking too much.

I invite you to conduct your proceedings, over which you have asked me to preside, in a manner befitting the grave occasion on which we have met. Differences of opinion are bound to exist; but I trust that everyone here will co-operate to make our deliberations dignified and conducive to the attainment of our goal.

SPEECH AT BOMBAY

December 26, 1940

[The resignation of Congress Provincial Ministries was hailed by the Muslim League as a day of deliverance. Sardar Patel analyses the Muslim League mentality and finally informs Mr. Jinnah that the Congress will not commit harakiri to placate him.]

Following the resignation of Ministries, internal differences in the Congress have disappeared.

Behind the Charkha is the whole philosophy of Satyagraha. If any of you disapprove of that cult, you should remain silent. When the struggle is on, the voice of the critic should be hushed; it is for the General to decide with what weapon he would fight.

Let January 26 be a day of our trial. We must prove our fitness to achieve our goal. No General could fight until the army is ready.

Mr. Jinnah demands that the Muslim League should be accepted as the sole representative of Muslims. To concede the claim of Mr. Jinnah is for the Congress to commit suicide in the hope of being reborn a Hindu organization.

This is the first occasion when the representatives of the different constituencies have met after the Ministry resigned. It is necessary that there should be such a party meeting in Christmas, when we can discuss the situation in the country, our difficulties and our future work. We should meet,

if necessary, every month in order to discuss our problems. No one should go away with the idea that in the coming months we would be doing nothing, while the British Government would be allowed to carry on the administration as it likes. In the very nature of things, British imperialism cannot last long and the burden of administering our own country must fall on our own shoulders whether we are ready or not.

As you know the Muslim League recently celebrated what is called its Day of Deliverance, as if the Congress Ministries were driven out of office. It was inspired by a fear as to what would happen to it if Congress made a settlement with the British Government.

The League forgot that the Congress was not driven out of office; it retired of itself. It was open to us even on the so-called Day of Deliverance to return to office, had we so chosen. It is no use praying to God for the resignation of Ministries, the credit, if any, is due to the Congress itself. We had given a pledge to our own electorates not to stick to office if by so doing the interests of the country would suffer. Then a time came when the Congress felt that it could not continue in office any longer, without detriment to the cause for which it existed and you may rest assured that the Congress is not going back to office until it can wield the real power of governance in a free India.

When the war started, Gandhiji declared his sympathy with Britain. Pledged as we were to freedom, we could not have any sympathy for Nazism, though it must be confessed that it was the humiliating treaty of Versailles, which the Britishers and their friends imposed upon Germany that was responsible for Nazism. However, Gandhiji made it clear that the Congress did not agree with him on

this question. The Congress had bitter memories of the last Great War.

Who can foretell who will win in the end? Anyway, whoever is vanquished will be finished and whoever wins will be weakened beyond repair. With its knowledge it was but natural that the Congress should ask the British Government whether it was prepared to declare that India would be free at the end of the war. The demand was natural and proper. The reply was that we were not united, that minorities needed to be protected and that the Princes had to be placated. How could we have continued in office when such was the attitude of the British Government?

There can be no compromise. So long as we have a third party in our midst, there cannot be a compromise between the minorities and the Congress. We have had ample experience in the past. We cannot forget how Sir Samuel Hoare set the Muslims against the Hindus when the Unity Conference was held at Allahabad. The British statesmen, in order to win the sympathy of the world, now go on repeating that they are willing to give freedom to India, were India united. The Day of Deliverance was evidently calculated to make the world and particularly the British public believe that India was not united and that the Muslims and Hindus were against each other. But when several sections of Muslims were found to oppose the Day of Deliverance the proposed anti-Hindu demonstration was converted into a Jinnah-Ambedkar-Byramji protest against the Congress ministries and the Congress High Command. Some people frighten us with a bogey of civil war. We cannot sacrifice our principles on such empty apprehensions. If there are any who would deem it fit to encourage

violence, pledged as we are to non-violence, we will have to go through the ordeal. We cannot forsake our principles. We must strive our utmost to create an atmosphere of non-violence in the country.

It is difficult to understand the position of the League. What does it want? The Congress has made friendly approaches repeatedly, but every time it has met with a rebuff. The Congress even overruled its revered leader, Pandit Malaviyaji, and did not reject the Communal Award. The League goes on rejecting whatever is offered, without formulating its own demands. The Anglo-Indian papers, which for the moment appear to represent the League's point of view, urge the formation of Coalition Ministries. The League has not made it clear whether it wants them and on what terms. Congress is anxious to make friends, but with whom? That is the question. There cannot be friendship unless there is willing mind on both sides. Mr. Jinnah charges the Congress with atrocities. He never could specify the charges. And now the Governors and the Viceroy have kept their mouths sealed lest they should displease the League by speaking the truth. The condition precedent to any negotiations which Mr. Jinnah makes is that the Congress should accept the League as the sole representative of the Muslims in India. If the Congress accepted that position it would have thrown the Pathans of the north overboard, jettisoned the Shias who are no less than three out of eight crores of Muslims in India, and betrayed Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and other Congress Muslims who had contributed in creating the National Congress. To concede the claim of Mr. Jinnah which Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan has repeated to-day, is for the Congress to commit suicide in the hope of being reborn a Hindu organization. Should we tell the Maulanas

and the leaders of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema that they should leave the national organization and submit to the communal leadership of Mr. Jinnah, because the British Government desires that Mr. Jinnah should be placated before the Congress gets a declaration of war aims as she desires? The British Government will be disappointed. Let it continue to rule with its advisers as long as it can. Even if we are a handful, we will not allow the Congress to commit political harakiri, as Mr. Jinnah wants it to do.

If the resignation of Ministries has brought real deliverance, it is to the Ministers who had their daily worries. Our internal differences have disappeared. The Congress has again accepted the leadership of Gandhiji, the only man who can lead us to victory. He is the miracle worker. Under his guidance we must now work. If there are any among Congressmen who are impatient about his methods, they are welcome to try out their own experiments. But they will fall; success will depend only upon loyalty in following the lead of Gandhiji.

AUGUST RESOLUTION

Speech in A. I. C. C. at Bombay

August 9, 1942

[In this short speech Sardar Patel seconded the Quit India resolution in the A.I.C.C. meeting. The speech is as usual marked by vigour and plain-speaking.]

In the last few days, since we passed the resolution in the Working Committee, the outside world has suddenly developed an enormous interest in India. We are now getting more publicity than we could ever get all these years even by spending money. We are now getting advice freely from those had no concern and who had evinced no interest in India so long. Some are giving advice, some threatening, some who professed to be friends of India are declaring that our action will not be in India's good. But I do not want to give any answer to any of these criticisms and advice for the simple reason that whatever answer I could give them will not reach them. The normal channels of publicity that are available are not in our control, and are not open to us. Only such things as are palatable to the Government are allowed to go out of India.

If America and England are still thinking that they could fight their enemies without the co-operation of forty millions of people, they are foolish. It must dawn on the people that this war is a people's war and that they should fight for their country and their freedom. As long as this feeling is non-existent, no amount of propaganda through the

newspapers and the radio can rouse the people to a supreme effort.

For three years the Congress has been scrupulously adhering to their policy of non-embarrassment and has done nothing even under provocation. But this attitude is not appreciated and Britain thinks that conditions would remain the same throughout. Now the enemy is at their door and they cannot risk being idle any longer.

British never Sincere in their Offer

Whatever the British Government are talking about, they are never sincere in their professions. In India they point to the Muslim League and ask to whom they should transfer power. But they never asked the same question of Burma. They were calling in their radio broadcasts and newspapers the government established in Burma as a Puppet Government. But what sort of a Government have they at New Delhi now. So far as India is concerned; even the so-called friends of India in England, like Mr. Attlee, are talking the same language as Churchill. Britain is interested in defending India only for the purpose of making India safe for future generations of Britain. In Russia it is a peoples' war, in China it is peoples' war, in both the countries the people are not fighting for their freedom but for preserving it. But if India is not for Indians, how can we make it a peoples' war?

They are calling this a war for democracy. The Congress had given three years to Britain to make that principle apply to India. When Churchill declared that the future of India was a purely British question and that it had already been decided by the British Government, no American who professes sympathy for India even raised a protest against this declaration.

Mr. Amery has recently made a statement in the House of Commons regarding transfer of power to Indians. The British need not worry to whom to transfer power. Let them transfer power to the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha, to any Indians so long as they give up their control over India.

There are some people, who still think that there would be some compromise between the Government and the Congress. I want to disabuse them of any such delusion. There is no more hope of any settlement with Britain. An opportunity is now given to the people to fight for their own independence as the Russians and the Chinese and many other nations were now doing elsewhere. They should not miss this opportunity, such an opportunity might not come again.

The fight that is before us is going to be a tough one, and as Mahatma Gandhi had emphasised, should be short and swift. Without wishing to go into details, he had told us that this time it will not be the jail-going type of movement. This time it will not happen that we would remain in jail for a year or two and cease to think of what is happening outside. Our object is to free India before the Japs come here and to fight them if they do. The movement would not be confined to Congressmen only; it would take in all men who call themselves Indians. It would also include all items of non-violent resistance already sanctioned by the Congress and probably some more.

SPEECH AT BOMBAY

August 9, 1945.

[This speech was given on the occasion of the celebration of August 9 at Bombay. This is the first powerful speech which was made by Sardar Patel after his release from the Ahmednagar Fort prison.]

Ninth of August today ! When I got up early this morning and opened the newspapers, the first thing that crossed my eyes was the hanging of that brave young man, Mahendra Choudhury of Bihar. And Wavell had asked to "forgive and forget". The new Secretary of State has said that Britain wants an equal partnership with India. Does it mean that if one young man is hanged here, another young man of theirs would be hanged there ?

I tell you I have now grave doubts about all this show. Our President has ordered that the 9th of August should be observed with dignity and calm that should enhance the prestige of the Congress. We sat silent observing his orders till this day, for the President was anxious that nothing should be said to disturb the atmosphere. But now let the President tell what is the meaning of hanging of that brave young man ? If there is no answer forthcoming of this stark truth, then no one can gag my mouth. Swaraj may come thereby or may not come. But Swaraj would surely not come by shirking at every stage. It was not my original intention to speak all this before you today. But when I read that staggering news of hanging, I thought the time had come to utter plain truth.

During the last three years India has witnessed many changes and the entire world also has undergone some transformation. You yourself bear witness to the happenings in this very city. We were in absolute dark when we were in goal, but now we have learnt a little of the happenings during these years. When we were put under arrest, we were not even told of our destination. Threats were uttered that a trial will be arranged for us. The Viceroy who has retired now wrote to us that we would be made to stand a trial for the disturbances of 1942. We welcomed the opportunity for a two-fold reason. We thought we would have an opportunity to prove before the world the justice of our cause and simultaneously we would expose the real culprits. But that Viceroy sailed off. Many Viceroys have come and gone, but their strategy has mostly remained uniform. India has witnessed many Secretaries of State coming and going. But never has the like of the last one occupied that chair. None would have wept over Amery's fall, though I do not know if he himself has been too much shocked by it.

We were told "Forget and Forgive", when we were released. It was gently said that mistakes have occurred on both sides. We believed them and felt that there was some change in their attitude, for they never owned their mistakes in the past. We thought there is nothing wrong in starting with a clean slate. But when I got up this morning, and read that a brave young man of Bihar had been hanged, when I thought that though a new slogan "Forget and Forgive" has been coined, British strategy remains the same grave doubts have arisen in my mind and I want to ask the Congress President about his message to observe the 9th of August peacefully. If bygones are to be bygones, then the curtain should be dropped on both sides. But if one side alone is

to be partially covered, then we shall have to expose the other side ruthlessly.

The atomic bomb in Japan has wrought unprecedented havoc and obliterated entire cities—infants, adults, aged, livestock and all. That is the picture of the western civilization in its fullest vulgarity. It may be said that Japan was given sufficient notice. May Japan would reap the harvest that she has sown. But if these people are to pursue that path of destruction, there will be no go for the world but to remember Gandhiji. Because the other mad course is to lead the world to destruction.

It is said that the Big Three would never abuse their might and would herald a new World Order. But let humanity remember their history, and none would be convinced of the Big Threes' claims. Let the record of the Two Bigs be set aside, but we know the English. They speak one thing and do the reverse.

This is the opening of British Labour's rule in this country. When a representative of Reuters asked for my reaction to the Labour victory, I told him to ask that Party, for it was their victory. We have had bitter experience of that Party in the past. Today I am neither happy nor sorry for their victory. We can judge them only by their actions. Some wise man can urge that the Indian administration is conducted by Governors and Secretaries and other countless functionaries. How could the British Government be mindful of such incidents as the present hanging? My answer is that if they are eager to rule over 400 million people without any responsibility and from such a distance, then they must relieve themselves of that burden and hand

over the reins to those who are more capable. If hangings are a routine in their administration, let them say so plainly.

'Quit India' was a battle-cry, and would remain so till patriots existed in India. No more of proposals and plans. India has chosen the path of sacrifice.

The Government had thrust the responsibility for the 1942 disturbances upon the Congress. Had the Congress ever wished to execute such a programme, the consequences would have been far graver to the Government. The Congress still does not want to go that way. It has on the contrary advised young men to discard that path, for it wants to oust the foreigners and will not succeed in doing so if we pursue those lines.

Because Gandhiji has showed the path of non-violence it does not mean that India accepted it in its entirety. I have yet to see a man who believes in non-violence as Gandhiji does. If you cannot wield a sword, at least you should be able to face the sword. Gandhiji has therefore taught the people to say No to the Government.

The August Movement has resulted in great gain. There has been a great awakening among women. The people in the city have no idea of the terrible privation that the women in villages had to undergo during the repression. The Congress is not defeated, but has emerged stronger. While Gandhiji enjoined the people to offer civil disobedience in a dignified manner, the Government ordered their forces to break the law in any manner they liked to put down the popular risings.

The Britishers talk of Hindu-Muslim discord. Who has thrust this responsibility on the head of the British? If they are sincere, let them transfer power to the Congress or the League. Let the issue

be referred to an impartial international tribunal, if there is any honest man left in the world. But if Government policy is that there could be no progress until the communal question is solved then the Congress would fight the Government all along.

Let Indians be allowed to rule over Britain for a week, and we promise to create dissensions in Great Britain so that England, Wales and Scotland would be wrapped into eternal quarrels.

THE STATES DEPARTMENT

[It has been unanimously admitted that Sardar Patel's handling of the problem of Indian States was a masterpiece of statesmanship.

In this statement, issued on the occasion of assuming charge of the States Department, Sardar Patel invited the Princess to play their part in shaping the destinies of a future India.]

It was announced some days back that the Government of India had decided to set up a Department to conduct their relations with the States in matters of common concern. This Department has come into being today and the States have been informed to this effect. On this important occasion I have a few words to say to the Rulers of Indian States, among whom I am happy to count many as my personal friends.

It is the lesson of history that it was owing to her politically fragmented condition and our inability to make a united stand that India succumbed to successive waves of invaders. Our mutual conflicts and internecine quarrels and jealousies have in the past been the cause of our downfall and our falling victims to foreign domination a number of times. We cannot afford to fall into those errors or traps again. We are on the threshold of independence. It is true that we have not been able to preserve the unity of the country entirely unimpaired in the final stage. To the bitter disappointment and sorrow of many of us some parts have chosen to go out of India and to set up their own Government. But

there can be no question that despite this separation a fundamental homogeneity of culture and sentiment reinforced by the compulsive logic of mutual interests would continue to govern us. Much more would this be the case with that vast majority of States which, owing to their geographical contiguity and indissoluble ties, economic, cultural and political, must continue to maintain relations of mutual friendship and co-operation with the rest of India. The safety and preservation of these States as well as of India demand unity and mutual co-operation between its different parts.

When the British established their rule in India they evolved the doctrine of Paramountcy which established the supremacy of British interests. That doctrine has remained undefined to this day, but in its exercise there has undoubtedly been more subordination than co-operation. Outside the field of Paramountcy there has been a very wide scope in which relations between British India and the States have been regulated by enlightened mutual interests. Now that British rule is ending, the demand has been made that the States should regain their independence. In so far as Paramountcy embodied the submission of States to foreign will, I have every sympathy with this demand ; but I do not think it can be their desire to utilise this freedom from domination in a manner which is injurious to the common interests of India or which militates against the ultimate paramountcy of popular interests and welfare or which might result in the abandonment of that mutually useful relationship that has developed between British India and Indian States during the last century. This has been amply demonstrated by the fact that a great majority of Indian States have already come into the Constituent Assembly. To those who have not done so, I appeal that they

should join now. The States have already accepted the basic principle that for Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications they would come into the Indian Union. We ask no more of them than accession on these three subjects in which the common interests of the country are involved. In other matters we would scrupulously respect their autonomous existence.

This country with its institutions is the proud heritage of the people who inhabit it. It is an accident that some live in the States and some in British India, but all alike partake of its culture and character. We are all knit together by bonds of blood and feeling no less than of self-interest. None can segregate us into segments; no impassable barriers can be set up between us. I suggest that it is therefore better for us to make laws sitting together as friends than to make treaties as aliens. I invite my friends the Rulers of States and their people to the Councils of the Constituent Assembly in this spirit of friendliness and co-operation in a joint endeavour, inspired by common allegiance to our motherland for the common good of us all.

There appears a great deal of misunderstanding about the attitude of the Congress towards the States. I should like to make it clear that it is not the desire of the Congress to interfere in any manner whatever with the domestic affairs of the States. They are no enemies of the Princely Order, but, on the other hand, wish them and their people under their aegis all prosperity, contentment and happiness. Nor would it be my policy to conduct the relations of the new Department with the States in any manner which savours of the domination of one over the other; if there would be any domination, it would be that of our mutual interests and welfare.

We have no ulterior motive or selfish interests to serve. Our common objective should be to understand each other's point of view and come to decisions acceptable to all and in the best interests of the country. With this object, I propose to explore the possibility of associating with the administration of the new Department a Standing Committee representative of both the States and British India.

We are at a momentous stage in the history of India. By common endeavour we can raise the country to a new greatness while lack of unity will expose us to fresh calamities. I hope the Indian States will bear in mind that the alternative to co-operation in the general interest is anarchy and chaos which will overwhelm great and small in a common ruin if we are unable to act together in the minimum of common tasks. Let not the future generation curse us for having had the opportunity but failed to turn it to our mutual advantage. Instead, let it be our proud privilege to leave a legacy of mutually beneficial relationship which would raise this Sacred Land to its proper place amongst the nations of the world and turn it into an abode of peace and prosperity.

SPEECH IN NEW DELHI

August 11, 1947.

[This speech was delivered at a mass meeting in connection with the Liberty Week celebration in New Delhi. Sardar Patel explained that in the circumstances prevalent in the country partition on the present pattern was the best thing possible. He exhorted the people to make India strong, prosperous and happy by hard work.]

Our first task is to stabilize, consolidate and strengthen ourselves and the rest can have only a secondary priority. My colleagues and I have not agreed to the partition of the country either because of fear or out of a sense of defeat. Under the prevailing conditions in the country partition of the present pattern was the best thing possible and I have no qualms about it. In a matter of weeks we have divided the country, the army, the services, etc. and this indeed has been a colossal task.

I, however, strongly believe that those who have seceded today will be disillusioned soon and their union with the rest of India is assured. What nature and God had intended to be one, can on no account be split into two for all times.

I appeal to you to rub out from your minds the memories of the past two years, deem it as a terrible nightmare and forget it, and to look forward with single-minded purpose to make India strong, prosperous and happy. This can only be done by hard work. A Socialist Government in Britain is calling upon the workers to sweat an hour more every day and the strange contrast here is that our Socialists

and others preach strikes and encourage wage-boosts. This can only result in printing more notes at Nasik and end up in serious trouble,

I welcome Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan's latest statement and am happy that the minorities in Pakistan would be protected and their rights safeguarded. Such a generous move by the League cannot but evoke reciprocity here in India.

I am sure that all the Indian States will join the Indian Union and none can afford to keep out and live in isolation. First things should be done first and the first job is to get the States to accede to and consolidate the Union. The demand of the people in the States for a democratic regime raises an entirely different issue. I cannot see how an Indian Ruler can exist with his subjects in hostility and clamouring for popular Government.

The Congress was pledged to rid the country of foreign domination, and after making considerable sacrifices and prolonged suffering it has succeeded. But the Congress has also worked for a united India and a union of all the communities, and unfortunately it cannot claim any success here. This has been due to factors beyond our control. Our joy on August 15 would have been fuller and greater, had not India been divided ; but this is not to be for the present.

I would make no efforts to explain away the responsibilities of the Congress to divide the country. We took these extreme steps after great deliberation. In spite of my previous strong opposition to partition, I agreed to it because I felt, I was convinced, that in order to keep India united it must be divided now.

My experience in office during the past year showed that it was impossible to do anything constructive with the Muslim League in. The League representatives during their continuance in office did nothing but to create deadlocks and their role was entirely an obstructionist one. Besides, as I have already once said, I found that the Muslims, save for a few exceptions, engaged in all capacities in the Government, were with the Muslim League. Thus the rot had set in and it could not be permitted to prolong any longer except at the risk of a disaster for the whole country. Indeed, at one stage—and it obtains even now to some degree—things had become so bad that with the killings at Calcutta and riots spread all over it, became a perilous adventure for Hindus and Muslims to visit one another's localities. The economic life of the country was paralysed and there was little security of life or property.

The only way out of the sickening situation, the Congress realised, lay in the elimination of the third party, the British Power. The British, on their part, declared that they would quit by June, 1948. But the period was long. Also their statement promising to hand over power to the authorities in Provinces gave rise to a vigorous effort to dislodge the Ministries in Assam, the Punjab and the Frontier. The League succeeded in the Punjab. Even though they failed in the Frontier and Assam, the League movement caused great misery and bloodshed.

In order to settle the issue immediately and prevent the slaughter of innocent people, the Congress decided to agree to the division of the country and demanded the partition of the Punjab and Bengal. This was no surrender to the League threats or policy of appeasement.

Today the partition of India is a settled fact, and yet it is an unreal fact. The partition, I hope, however, removes the poison from the body politic of India. This, I am sure, would result in the seceding areas desiring to reunite with the rest of India.

India is one and indivisible. One cannot divide the sea or split the running waters of a river. The Muslims have their roots in India. Their sacred places and their cultural centres are located here in India. I do not know what they can do in Pakistan and it will not be long before they begin to return.

Most of the opposition to the Congress in this partition came from quarters which had never in the past given evidence of any strength. Despite the division it must be remembered we have 80 per cent of the country with us which is a compact unit with great possibilities. Twenty per cent has gone over to Pakistan, and I wish that State all success and prosperity.

I wish them to be strong because then alone there can be friendly relations and amity between the two States. There can be no friendship between a strong unit and a weakling. India harbours no ill-will against Pakistan and will, in fact, do all in her power to help the new State.

The main task before India today is to consolidate herself into a well-knit and united power. The obstacle of foreign domination is now gone, but there are serious problems that confront us. Economically India is in a sad plight. The war has resulted in making India a creditor nation but that does not mean much. United Kingdom is our debtor and owes us a huge amount, but she does not appear to have anything to pay us now. In fact the Big Powers have so arranged their economies that smaller and poorer countries remain at a disadvantage.

The Socialists in India are always talking of a Socialist Republic. Instead of restricting their activities to mere agitation I would ask them to take over the administration of one province and solve the problems which have arisen in the wake of a prolonged war.

In contrast to their counterparts in Great Britain, the Indian Socialists are pursuing an opposite course. Strikes are encouraged and higher wages demanded. If there is no water in the well, none could draw any to drink. By all means let them take away the wealth of a few rich in the country; but to what extent would this afford any relief to the poor—the teeming millions?

The need of the hour is to increase the wealth of the country, and this can be done only by putting in more and more work and thus increasing production. This requires the maintenance of peace in the country. For one year now there has been disorder in the country. Now that Pakistan has been established, there is no more fight between Hindus and Muslims. If, unfortunately, there should be a recurrence of this internal strife, it would not be the cowardly killing of innocent people but would be between two armies of the two States.

I appeal to the people not to indulge in mutual strife but to create a calm atmosphere and engage yourselves in constructive activities which are essential for the building up of a new India.

As regards the States question, the co-operation of all the Rulers is necessary to consolidate and strengthen the Indian Union. When the foreign power has been eliminated, the Princes will have to adjust themselves to the new democratic order. The days of those Rulers who do not command the confidence of their subjects are numbered. The majority

of the States have acceded to the Union, and I appeal to the rest to join the Union before August 15. States which do not come in now but may decide to join at a later date, would have to accede on different terms. These days no State can afford to live in isolation.

I ask the people to exercise reserve in judging the role of the Princes at the present juncture. The Rulers have not been free uptil now and many of them do not even now believe that Paramountcy is lapsing on August 15. Many of them being descendants of great and benevolent Rulers of the past ages, I have no doubt that they would not hesitate in pursuing a correct policy and become popular rulers.

Our problems are mainly domestic. Ever since I was released from prison, I have been saying that Imperialism is on its last legs not only in India but in all Asia. The British are quitting India and I think that Dutch Imperialism will meet its end in Indonesia.

There cannot be in the future any more separate electorates or weightages and special treatment. Every community must get what is its due, but if a community which forms 15 per cent of the population has 60 per cent representation, say, in the police department, it undoubtedly creates a problem.

As regards the agitation for cow protection, I agree with the demand but I ask why no such agitation was sponsored in the past. In countries where cows enjoy no legal protection, they are looked after much better and yield more milk. But at a time when the Government are faced with the problem of protecting human beings, the question of

protecting cows cannot have priority. I deprecate attempts which are supposed to unite the country but in fact divide the Hindus. Nobody today, except the Congress, can undertake the task of uniting the country.

India has nothing but goodwill towards all, but if her safety is endangered she must have the strength to defend herself, and for this people must work.

SPEECH AT AMRITSAR

September 30, 1947.

[After the partition of India, an exchange of population became an unavoidable necessity on account of the reckless butchery of men and children in West Punjab and the raping and abduction of women. In the East Punjab also people retaliated in their mad anger. Sardar Patel flew to Amritsar on September 30, 1947, in order to appeal to the people to stay their hands irrespective of what the other side did and to help the Muslim refugees to cross the border peacefully.]

I remember how it was in this very city, Amritsar, I held discussion a few years ago for raising a suitable memorial to the martyrs of Jallianwala Bagh and how at Lahore for the first time we all—Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims—took the pledge of winning complete independence. In the blood-bath of Jallianwala Bagh had mixed the blood of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims.

I am grieved to think that things have come to such a pass that no Muslim can go about in Amritsar and no Hindu or Sikh can even think of living in Lahore. The erection of a memorial to Jallianwala Bagh martyrs has become a painful memory and the hard-won freedom has been followed by such unspeakable tragedies. This is a situation which has brought dishonour and disgrace to all of us, and India which looked forward to raising her stature in the eyes of the world after the attainment of Independence has now to hold her head in shame.

Butchery of innocent and defenceless men, women and children does not behove brave men, it is the war of the jungle and the hall-mark of inhumanity and barbarity. There will be occasions and opportunities for all of you to show your zest to fight, one must seek for it one's ground and suitable time. It is now time not to be fool-hardy or desperate but time to reflect calmly on your course of action.

We have won our freedom to make our country great and prosperous, not to destroy what little has been vouchsafed to us by our alien rulers. If we are not careful, we shall lose even our long-cherished freedom which we have secured after such suffering and so many struggles. You must remember that the lives of millions are at stake; they cannot be gambled away to enable us to satisfy any spirit of vengeance or retaliation. It is essential that you must maintain peace and break the vicious circle of attacks and retaliation and counter-retaliation and see to it that the refugees have safe transit. Any obstacle in the way of the refugee movement will only worsen the plight of our refugees who are fighting the elements, hunger, disease and maltreatment, to come to a land where they hope to find peace, shelter and opportunities to lead peaceful and civilized existence. We should do nothing to shatter this hope, which is probably the only thing that is sustaining them.

I am quite certain that India's interest lies in getting all her men and women across the border and sending out all Muslims from East Punjab. We can then settle down to the tremendous task of repairing the damage done and making this land by our labours the same fruitful garden as our refugees have left behind.

I deprecate the demand for police and military aid which people are putting forward. Such a demand may befit the weak but it does not suit the brave and able-bodied men of the Punjab. They should organize themselves on the right lines. The safety and defence of the frontiers are the concern of the Government but at the same time people should organize themselves. The Government will give them arms and equipment if they know how to use them on the right lines. I have come to you with a specific appeal and that is to pledge the safety of the Muslim refugees crossing the city. It is hardly creditable to us that we do not realize wherein our good lies. Muslim evacuees are going under agreed arrangements of exchange of population. They should really need no protection but should be allowed to go in peace. Bitterness fed by years of propaganda of hate has gone too deep to allow any Muslim to remain in the East Punjab and any Hindu or Sikh to live in the West Punjab. It is, therefore, in the interest of everyone that this exchange should be effected peacefully and smoothly. Any obstacles or hindrances will only worsen the plight of our refugees, who are already performing prodigious feats of valour and endurance.

It does not become a brave people to perpetrate deeds of brutality on defenceless men, women and children. This is not dictated by any code of chivalry or honour. If others cast chivalry and honour to the winds it does not justify us in debasing ourselves. If we have to fight we must fight clean. Such a fight must await appropriate time and conditions, and you must be wary in choosing your ground.

To fight against the refugees is no fight at all. No laws of humanity or war among honourable

men permit the murder of people who have sought shelter and protection, Such misdeeds on the other side can be left to be tackled at a more opportune time.

I appeal to you to act with prudence and foresight. You should allow free and unmolested passage to the Muslim refugees.

Let there be a truce for three months in which both sides can exchange their refugees. This sort of truce is permitted even by laws of war. Let us take the initiative in breaking this vicious circle of attacks and counter-attacks. They do good to nobody; they can only do a great deal of harm to us.

If you do not have faith in the Pakistan Government or its people, you can hold your hands for a week and see what happens. If they do not observe the truce in the right spirit, the world will know who the breakers of laws of humanity are. We shall then have every justification for holding them to account. Make way for the refugees with your own force of volunteers and let them deliver the refugees safely at the frontier. Let the whole world see that we mean well and we mean business and that it is they who have evil intentions and evil designs.

SIKH CONFERENCE AT PATIALA

October 22, 1947

[Sardar Patel visited Patiala in response to an invitation to attend the Panthic Conference there. In the two speeches he gave them, one conference and at the other at a public meeting, he appealed to the Sikhs to rehabilitate their reputation which they had built during the World War and to make a proper use of the sword at the right time and in a right cause.]

On hearing of the convening of the conference the Defence Minister and I decided to meet the Sikh leaders at a very critical time in their history.

I intend to place before you a few words of friendly advice as from one who has throughout admired your virtues of courage and patriotism and has nothing but the warmest friendly feelings for your community.

I recall how with the strong support of H. H. the Maharaja of Patiala I appealed to your leaders and the vast gathering at Amritsar for your help and co-operation in securing safe passage for Muslim convoys through Amritsar. I was gratified at the response to that appeal and I regarded that response as a token of the regard which you were kind enough to show me.

I warn you against hasty decisions on vital matters in a most difficult situation. I fully appreciate the tempers which have been disturbed under the blows which destiny has visited upon you and the anger that rules your hearts.

But you are a brave people and you must face situation like brave men. It does not behove the brave to besmirch the honour of their swords and the fair name of their community and country by spilling innocent blood. The time is for calm and dispassionate thinking over your future course of action and for wisely so shaping your conduct as to bring glory to your community and your country, and not for bemoaning your fate or counting your losses and for hoping to make up for them by retaliation. The Sikh community has been misrepresented and vilified abroad by certain interested propagandists. You have to rehabilitate your reputation which you built up during the two world wars. For that it is not enough to wield sword, but to know how to use it. These propagandists are concentrating their efforts on maligning the Sikhs.

There is another set of propagandists which is bent on isolating the Sikhs and creating divisions between Hindu and Sikh and propagating that it would now be conflict between Sikhs and Hindus. This set is more hostile than the first. The former is only creating a legend to serve and revive old imperialist justification for foreign rule in India. The latter are, however, enemies both within our ranks and without. They must be guarded against and their propaganda given a lie to.

When we accepted division, it was like agreeing to have a diseased limb amputated so that the remaining may live in a sound condition. But before we could start the process of healing, events have overtaken us. Evil cannot be met by evil, but by good. Although we cannot act in entire accord with the creed of non-violence in the imperfect state of mental and moral equipment which is necessary for that purpose, we cannot act

in such a manner as to degrade the sword which we wield. When the right time and the right cause come, you can use your sword to your heart's content. Now you have to sheathe your sword so that you can raise the moral tone of the people, which is now at such a low ebb that lawlessness, contempt for law, attacks on innocent train passengers, and brutalities on helpless persons are being perpetrated. It is up to all of us to check that tendency and you can give the right lead in the matter. We must create the right atmosphere in which we can achieve our cherished objectives of raising the status and the standard of living of the people. We must resuscitate our moral sense which seems to have been dulled by the prejudices and anger which cloud our minds. Unless we rise above such prejudices and anger, we can never achieve all that we fought the struggle for freedom for.

I appeal to you to take decisions consistent with your responsibilities. You must support your Government which is valiantly struggling against heavy odds. It is your own Government, which is entitled to your support.

I thank you for the honour done to me by inviting me to address this most representative gathering.

I recall how after years of struggle and suffering India has won Independence and shaken off the foreign yoke. All of us who took part in this struggle did so with the idea that, when Independence was achieved, there would be good government in India. When we accepted partition, it was with the sincere desire that we should thereby be enabled to work out our own salvation, unhampered by factors which rendered progress impossible. At

the same time, we wished Pakistan well and hoped that under settled conditions, when they realized that we were really brothers and not two nations of different faith and ideologies, they would come back to us. But the poison has been injected too far by the ceaseless propaganda of hate and of the two-nation theory.

The result has been that no Sikh and Hindu can live in peace and safety in Pakistan, a fact which had its reactions in that no Muslim could live without fear in East Punjab. Nevertheless, we have to so order our conduct that no further internecine quarrels taint our history. We must all live in amity and goodwill and must not tolerate 'goonda raj' which is being perpetrated in various areas owing to the spirit of lawlessness which the last few weeks have generated and promoted.

After alien rule to which both the Rulers of the States and the people were equally subject has been removed, all those who are left belong to one family. There can, therefore, be no quarrel with the Princes. They are ours and we can make them understand and appreciate our point of view. But, before you can make them understand and ask them to relieve themselves of the burden which they are shouldering, it is your bounden duty that you must be worthy of taking over those responsibilities. It is not enough to ask for responsible government. You must know how to digest it.

No Government can function without popular support. Travancore and Mysore are living examples of how in the fitness and fulness of time popular unity and strength had made the Rulers part with power. This shows that we must change our methods to suit the new circumstances which the departure of alien rule has created.

I myself took part in many a fight with Rulers in the past. But I always told them my struggle was not with the Rulers but with those agents of alien power who were propping them up against popular demands and popular forces. But the days of vilifying Princes, calling them names and maligning them are gone. It is not only waste of energy to concentrate on them, but also needless, irritating and profitless undertaking. Our methods now have to be guided by a more friendly approach and in a spirit of understanding and goodwill. No Government anywhere in India can be carried on without popular support. The days when people could sit on their bayonets for any length of time have gone. I am sure the Princes themselves realize that their interests lie in taking the people with them. Why should we, therefore, pick up quarrels or choose the path of ill will and hostility?

I appeal to you to cultivate a proper sense of moral values. I ask you to do a little heart-searching. We can only advise you, but you can act on that advice only according to your capacity. If you are selfless workers, you will get reward. But if you become involved in mutual jealousies and internecine quarrels, you can only do damage to the cause which you profess to uphold. When we achieved Independence, it was with a view to carving out for India a place in the world polity and to raise the stature and the standard of living of the people. Instead, we find ourselves fully preoccupied with the task of meeting the most gigantic problem of refugee relief that has ever faced men in human history.

This is not the time to involve ourselves in needless disputes, nor can we ever afford to follow the mirage of many "stans" like Khalistans and

Sikhistsans or Jatistans. If we are not careful and become a prey to these inimical ideas, we can only succeed in turning India into a *pagalistan* (land of lunatics). It is therefore, up to you to forget your mutual quarrels and behave with a sense of responsibility and in a spirit of co-operation and goodwill. We have formidable task before us. Attacks on railways, looting, and the part which even sometimes the military and the police play in such incidents merely shows that we are face to face with moral bankruptcy, which if not checked must mean downfall and ruin.

Remember, if a hungry man dies of starvation, he dies without a stain on his honour. But one who steals to feed himself virtually suffers from living death. He has not followed the path of honour and glory, but that of shame and disgrace. If we want popular Government, we must build up popular support and strength. Princes want respect and reverence. They will gracefully yield to popular demands if they find that a sense of responsibility and popular support prompt the popular organizations. I therefore ask such organizations to work selflessly and in a spirit of public service and thereby earn not only the gratitude of the people but also the confidence of the Rulers, and achieve the object which is neither inimical to the interests of the Princes nor inconsistent with their responsibilities. For, after all, no Prince can afford to treat popular support with contumely, nor popular grievances with impunity.

SPEECH IN JUNAGADH

November 13, 1947

[Junagadh, situated in the Kathiawar peninsula, was the one State in India which created some problems by acceding to Pakistan. Upon this the Nawab was faced with a popular revolt, and unable to face it he fled to Karachi. The Dewan who was left in charge of the administration appealed to Pakistan for help in vain and, finally, with the consent of the Nawab, handed over the administration of the State to Indian Union. The Indian Government took over the administration and ultimately held a plebiscite in which there was overwhelming support for accession to the Indian Union.]

The main purpose of my visit to Junagadh is to settle the many problems which the complete abdication of the authority which ruled has suddenly raised.

I congratulate you, the people of Junagadh on the victory achieved by you without bloodshed. I also congratulate Brig. Gurdayal Singh and his men of the Kathiawar Defence Forces who have behaved with exemplary discipline and steadfastness and efficiency. The task of the army is not only to fight but also to prevent fighting. This force has achieved that in an ample measure.

I also congratulate the members of the Juna-

gadh Administration who had realized, before it was too late, which way the right course lay and in which direction the path of rectitude pointed. However, those who wrongly advised the Nawab of Junagadh to accede to Pakistan were not true to the salt which they had eaten. For listening to this ill-intentioned and ill-omened advice, the Nawab has paid dearly.

The action of the Nawab of Junagadh will be a lesson to those who persist in their chimera of attachment to an authority with which they have no natural ties.

Negotiations had been conducted by responsible men of the Junagadh State for accession of the State to the Indian Union. The Ruler professed attachment to the majority of the subjects and the Princes of Kathiawar with whom he had the most friendly relations. But shortly after, moves were initiated in the reverse direction and the Nawab's eyes were turned to Pakistan. He had gone whither he cast his longing eyes. Let him remain there.

The State does not belong to any single individual. Paramountcy has been eliminated, certainly not by the efforts of the Princes, but by that of the people. It is, therefore, the people who have got the right to assert themselves and the Nawab cannot barter away the popular privilege of shaping its destiny.....

Pakistan had attempted to set off Kashmir against Junagadh. When we raised the question of settlement of this problem in a democratic way Pakistan at once told us they could consider this matter if we applied that policy to Kashmir State. Our reply was that we would agree to

Kashmir, if they agreed to Hyderabad. Pakistan, however, pointed out that they had no say in the matter. Nevertheless, whenever Hyderabad has been in difficulties, there is always a trek of the leaders of the Ittehad-ul-Muslemin to Mr. Jinnah.

It was only the other day that a solemn agreement confirmed by the Nizam and his Council was set at nought as a result of one of those periodical pilgrimages. Seldom has the history of the world seen a more farcical proceeding. The State, which boasted of a position of special importance, was reduced to submission by a crowd of Muslims who were determined to see that no agreement was concluded with the Indian Dominion. The Nizam had become a slave of his own Frankenstein.

The Ittehad-ul-Muslemin is trying to play the same game as the advisers of the Nawab of Junagadh had played in Junagadh. Hyderabad is, as it were, situated in India's belly. How can the belly breathe if it is cut off from the main body? Nizam's reported attempts to secure a seaboard, such as, Goa or Masulipatam, will end only in failure. These are not the Nizam's patrimony. They are not like chattel to be transferred as a business transaction.

If Hyderabad is to be saved, it must effect a radical change in its methods and policy. In the world of today, only those who have guts can make their voice felt. If Hyderabad wishes to be heard, it must follow bravely and courageously the popular will. Otherwise, Hyderabad's fate will sooner or later be the same as that of other rulers and dynasties who had attempted to thwart the popular will only at the cost of their existence.

The problem of Hyderabad is the affair of India and India alone. India has no other wish except to remain at peace with Pakistan. After all, Pakistan is our neighbour and one does not pick quarrels with one's neighbour. We agreed to the creation of Pakistan in the spirit in which two brothers agree to divide their joint property so that each would follow his independent existence in peace, security and prosperity. Pakistan felt that they would make of it a heaven on earth, but very soon hell was let loose. They had perhaps thought that, faced with critical problems, India would not be able to deal with the inroads on her integrity and on her security.

The process of infiltration started with Rampur. There it was suppressed and eliminated. Junagadh was the next target. You have seen the result. In Kashmir they have followed even worse tactics. They have raised communal passions amongst tribesmen, equipped them and asked them to effect a *coup d'etat*. The result has been great sorrow, plunder, rape, loot, massacre, destruction of life and property, and atrocities on women. The erstwhile happy Valley has tasted the bitter experience of liberation by Pakistan. But our troops have cleared most of the Valley of the invaders and, God willing, they will completely eliminate them.

Meanwhile one hears rumblings in far off Tripura. I should like to warn the authorities who are indulging in these manoeuvres that they should not be under any delusion that India's troubles have in any undermined her strength. We have resources to meet a challenge from whatever quarter it might come.

I would urge you not to let the present

opportunity of learning to defend yourselves slip. You have seen what a disciplined army can achieve. Learn from the army and emulate their example. You should never be taken in by panic. You should be fair to all. You must use your resources not only to defend yourselves but also to defend and protect the property and honour of your Muslim brethren who might agree to owe allegiance to India. As for those who harbour feelings of disloyalty or who feel they have an obligation to Pakistan, they must follow the path set for them by their Nawab who has already shown the way. Let them go to Pakistan if they feel that they have more in common with people there than with India.

I emphatically repudiate the right of any outside authority, like Pakistan, to interfere with the popular will within our territory. The Indian Dominion forces have come to Junagadh, not merely at the request of the Dewan but also at the behest of the people of Junagadh whose will the Dewan himself had ascertained before inviting India to take over the administration. It was, therefore, at the express desire and will of the people of Junagadh that the Indian Army marched into Junagadh, and when they leave the State, they would make sure that it was a popular administration which was in Junagadh and not an imposed Government which held the sway.

No appeal to outside authority or force nor any appeal to any international court can succeed in dislodging the popular verdict. It is on this sanction that we justify the present move of the Indian Dominion, and it is on this sanction that we can conclusively justify our action to the world at large.

THE ORISSA AND CHHATISGARH STATES

December 16, 1947.

[In the Eastern States Sardar Patel acted upon his policy of integration along with democratization by bringing about an administrative merger of these tiny principalities with the adjoining Provinces of Orissa and C.P. The " bloodless revolution " resulting from the operation of this policy has solved many complicated problems of Indian politics.]

The public has already received through the Press and over the radio a fairly clear and detailed picture of the settlement which I have reached, during the course of my visit to Orissa and C.P. and Berar, with the Rulers of Orissa and Chattisgarh States on the problem of integration of these States with their neighbouring Provinces. I feel, however, that for a correct appreciation of this important event, it is necessary for me to explain the background and the policy underlying that settlement. Democratization of the administration which has long been the keynote of Congress policy towards the States, has become a pressing problem since August 15. The Princes themselves have in many cases begun to realize the spirit of the times and have been gradually introducing measures in accord with that spirit. The progress has been in some States slow, in others it has been swift, but everywhere it has been sure.

It should be obvious to everyone, however, that even democracy and democratic institutions can function efficiently only where the unit to which these are applied can subsist in a fairly autonomous existence. Where, on account of smallness of its size, isolation of its situation, the inseparable link with a neighbouring autonomous territory, be it a Province or a bigger State, in practically all economic matters of every-day life, the inadequacy of resources to open up its economic potentialities, the backwardness of its people and the sheer incapacity to shoulder a self-contained administration, a State is unable to afford a modern system of government, both democratization and integration are clearly and unmistakably indicated.

In the world of today where distances are fast shrinking and masses are being gradually brought into touch with latest administrative amenities, it is impossible to postpone for a day longer than necessary the introduction of measures which would make the people realize that their progress is also proceeding at least on the lines of their neighbouring areas. Delays inevitably lead to discontent, which in its turn results in lawlessness; the use of force may for a time check the popular urge for reform, but it can never succeed in eradicating it altogether. Indeed, in many of the States with which I had to hold discussions during the last two days large-scale unrest had already gripped the people; in others the rumblings of the storm were being heard. In such circumstances after careful and anxious thought, I came to the conclusion that for smaller States of this type, placed in circumstances which I have described above, there was no alternative to integration and democratization.

At the same time I felt that their rulers had

acquired by heredity and history certain claims on the people which the latter must honour. Their dignities and privileges and their means of subsistence on a reasonable standard must be assured. I have always held the belief that the future of the Princes lies in the service of their people and their country and not in the continued assertion of their autocracy. In conformity with these ideas, I felt that on release from an increasingly onerous and awkward responsibility, but at the same time with their personal position and that of the ruling family fully safeguarded, they would have opportunities of service which have hitherto been denied to them and which many of them are genuinely longing for and genuinely anxious to secure, and they would cease to be the targets of continuous bitter attacks and ill-will.

The settlement which we have reached at Cuttack and Nagpur is actuated by these motives, prompted by these considerations and governed by these principles. I have no doubt that it is in the best interests of the Rulers, the people and the country at large. I am particularly grateful to the Rulers of the States who showed a commendable appreciation of the realities of the situation and a benevolent regard for public good. To all of them, undoubtedly the decisions they have taken have involved considerable sacrifice of powers and fortune. They have accepted this sacrifice cheerfully and voluntarily in the interests of their people and the country at large. I am sure their people will react favourably to this generous response to public interests.

Throughout my discussions with the Rulers I was careful to emphasize that the solution which we suggested for the difficult problems with which

we and they were equally faced, was for them to accept or reject of their own free will. There was no compulsion save that of events and of the circumstances and peculiar problems of their States. I also told them that in offering this solution we were actuated by nothing but the friendliest disposition towards them and had nothing but the ultimate good of the Princes and their people at heart. I also maintained that their voluntary surrender of most of the powers that they wielded so far would increase and not reduce the prestige that they have enjoyed and would create in the hearts of their people a place of lasting affection and regard which would redound to their glory. I am very glad that they all responded to these sentiments, and would ask the people of these States to play their own part and to extend to each one of them unfailing cordiality and unstinted goodwill.

In future, if the people of these States have any grievances, they can only be against the popular representatives and leaders who would be charged with their interests and welfare, and not against the Princes. These Princes have by their act of abnegation purchased in perpetuity their right to claim the devotion of their people. I am sure that very soon the Provincial Governments who would be acting for the Dominion Government in discharging administrative functions in these States will turn their thoughts and energies to ameliorating the conditions of the people and to devising ways and means of associating representatives of States with the fashioning of administrative measures. Let them all realize the stakes involved—some 56,000 sq. miles of territory with population of about 8 millions, a gross revenue of about 2 crores and immense potentialities for the future. It is the undisputable rights of the people in these territories

to modern amenities of Government which should be the governing consideration in everything that we do for them. It will also be the duty of the people concerned to help and co-operate wholeheartedly with the respective Provincial administrations in this process of unification and amelioration, so that they may derive the full benefit of this great achievement.

SPEECH IN CALCUTTA

January 3, 1948.

[Sardar Patel halted at Calcutta on his way back from Shillong and spoke to an exceptionally large crowd of more than half a million assembled at the Maidan. As was to be expected, the Deputy Prime Minister touched on many subjects in the speech.]

You all know how immediately after attaining independence India was overtaken by serious difficulties which had taxed the energies of the Government and the people alike. We all wanted independence and we have secured it. Our life's mission has been fulfilled. I have no doubt other countries in Asia will follow suit. Burma is gaining its independence tomorrow. But the over-all question remains whether we realize that we have won independence and whether we appreciate the full significance of the event. This again raises the issues; how we should utilize the freedom which we have won after such heroic struggles and how we should prepare for the enjoyment of its fruits. It is in this connection that I want to place a few thoughts before you, for seldom do occasions arise when we can open out our hearts to you.

I sympathise deeply with the people of Bengal in the afflictions which the separation of East and West Bengal has brought about. We have all been

deeply affected by it, but it is profitless now to go into the question as to why we accepted it. Our main task is and should be to extract good out of evil.

There is no reason why despite partition there should be a wall of hostility between East and West Bengal. You have one language, a common culture, common traditions and a common way of life. All these inevitably draw people together. I cannot, therefore, understand why there should be any ill-will. The same, in a wider sphere, applies to Pakistan and India.

Nevertheless, I cannot disguise my feeling that the situation is full of dangerous possibilities. But danger does not indicate panic. Instead it calls forth alertness to ensure that nothing is done to incur blame or reproof. India, as it has been left after partition, is not a small country. A population of 30 crores provide an immense field for constructive work.

Even though we were overwhelmed by disturbances after the Independence Day, we have accomplished a great deal. We have carried out successfully and effectively the separation of armed services, stores, both civil and military, and of many other large undertakings incidental to partition.

We have settled all this out of court. In addition, we have carried out an exchange of 40 to 50 lakhs of people on each side. Any government in the world would have been overwhelmed by such tremendous responsibilities, but thank God, we have weathered the storm and turned the corner.

This, however, emphasizes the necessity of cleaning our decks for further action and purifying.

the atmosphere so that the task of reconstruction and rehabilitation can be carried out in a peaceful atmosphere.

If you reflect on the condition of India today, you will realize how critical the position is. India is short of food and has to pay a heavy price for imports to make up the deficiency. If we have to digest freedom we have to have a strong army which involves considerable equipment for the three services, Army, Navy and Air Force. If we do not do it or cannot do it, Independence cannot be long sustained.

This involves a strong industrial support without which our armed forces cannot accomplish much. But the fact remains that despite the spirit and impetus given by the war, India is still backward in industrial development. Financially, India has turned from a debtor to a creditor country but unfortunately that credit cannot be utilized, and, on the whole, the position is worse than before.

For an all-out industrial effort which is necessary in order to promote India's industries, support from labour is indisputably necessary, but labour has fallen on evil days. Its organizers know only one thing and believe only in one method. That is to prop up their leadership by strikes.

They do not seem to realize that if they killed industries, labour itself would cease to exist. This does not mean, however, that labour should not get its reward. What labour is entitled to must be settled and settled satisfactorily and peacefully. But for that, the correct method is not stoppage of work, nor sabotage, but arbitration. It is only then that Government can see to it that labour gets its

just reward. If the leaders of labour continue to follow their present methods, nothing but disaster awaits the country. Let them look around for guidance. Other countries have advanced industrially. In America there is no labour problem. In England there is a Socialist Government but it does not have to use force or resort to firing. Labour responds to its call patriotically.

It is in this context that we must look into the recent incident in which some people attempted to force the hands of the Government of West Bengal in regard to the Public Safety Bill. If they felt that the Government was not doing the right thing, they should have represented to the Working Committee or could have appealed to the people's vote but instead they resorted to coercion and coercion of a worst type.

It is not the democratic way but the goondas' way of doing things, and I deprecate that in the city of Calcutta such a thing should have been perpetrated.

In another small State worse things have happened. When we secured the merger of Kharsawan State as an interim measure, we decided to give its administration to the province of Orissa. An agitation grew up that it should merge into Bihar. We made it plain that we would look into this question impartially and come to a final decision. In the meantime let Orissa administer it. What was the result? An agitation was organized and innocent people were misled into taking the law in their own hands. The result was that police had to open fire and some lives were lost. Everybody must regard it as a bad thing, but it is worthwhile reflecting upon why it happened.

It is merely because we have forgotten so quickly what we strove to imbibe during so many years of struggle, that in the two provinces where our own Governments are functioning, a small dispute as to which province should administer this small State had given rise to such unfortunate occurrence.

This is not the way we should function. Those, who are not satisfied with the way things are going on, have got the opportunity to remove the Ministry and to take over the reins of office.

Whatever else may be said against the present Ministry in Bengal, there is at least one thing about which there is no dispute. After many years Bengal has secured a band of workers whose honesty and incorruptibility are not in question. I have no doubt they will learn by experience, but if any of you feels that you are better equipped, I have already told you how to secure the removal of the Ministry. But goondaism cannot, and will not, be allowed to prevail. I sincerely tell you that we cannot afford it when we have such delicate tasks to fulfil.

The country is saved from fragmentation by the accession of the States. Otherwise, Rajasthan would have been something worse than Pakistan. There is all round scarcity of consumer goods. The moral is plain. You should have patience so that these stupendous responsibilities could be satisfactorily discharged by the Central and Provincial Governments.

You have been slaves for 200 years. Now that your own men are in office, why can't you have patience for a few years? Instead, we have the

sickening spectacle of a so-called token one-day's strike by Labour in Bombay after their representatives had subscribed to three years of non-strike truce. And what for was this strike organized? Admittedly to show that the leadership of Labour is with the organizers. This is sheer nonsense. Holidays with pay are always welcome to anyone. A strike of this kind, which does not involve loss of wages, cannot, therefore, show with whom the leadership lies. Calcutta has had a taste of a general strike once. I hope you have not forgotten its lesson and in all humility I ask you to avoid its repetition.

I have been blamed that I am a friend of Rajas. Capitalists and Zamindars, but I claim to be a friend of labour and the poor as well. Since I have followed Gandhiji, I have resolved not to own any property and I have none. But like Gandhiji I want to make the capitalists also understand which way their true duty lies. I cannot succumb to the prevalent fashion to pose as a leader or to attempt to gain leadership by abusing Princes, Capitalists, etc. without rhyme or reason.

Many said some time ago that by bringing in Princes I had harmed the cause of the people. But they were not prepared for the merger of 40 States into a neighbouring province in two days; nor did they seem to realize the elementary fact that if Princes wished to exist, they cannot do so without the people.

Then these gentlemen say, we want to establish a Mazdoor Raj. There can be no quarrel about it. In the United Kingdom, they too, have a Labour Government in office, but it has not assumed office by following the path of strikes.

They realize that strikes ultimately harm the interests of the people and of Labour itself. If Labour does not see in which direction its interest lies, nothing but harm will come to this country, and Labour itself would cease to exist.

If they want to carry on Government, there are only two ways of doing that. One is the path laid out by Mahatma Gandhi. That is establishment of Ram Rajya in which there is complete peace, freedom from crime and coercion of any kind. All of you can try to achieve it, but there is no doubt that you could not get it overnight. The alternative to this method is a firm Government, backed by a strong army, strong navy, strong air force and strong police, but ultimately governed by the will of the people.

Under such a system the Government in office is entitled to the support of the people unless it follows a wrong path. Profulla Babu is a servant of the people. They can place before him all their grievances, for he is not inaccessible like foreigners. Bengal should be proud of its Ministry, its police and its public services. It should teach them how to be good public servants. Similarly the Ministry cannot act in an irresponsible manner. The Public Safety Bill is being attacked, because it is taken to be an encroachment on civil liberties of the people, but they forget that the Bill is to be enforced by popular representatives. If our own men utilize the provisions of the Bill to harrass their political opponents, they cannot remain in office for a day. If, therefore, anybody wants to attack the Government on this plank, he is making a great mistake.

They also say that the new Ministry is behav-

ing like its predecessors. Even if they did so, where was the objection? After all, they are responsible and responsive men. They cannot harm anyone without paying the penalty for it.

It is in these circumstances that the Ministry has thought fit, placing before it the interest of the province, to ask for special powers and they are entitled to get them. Democracy has just been born. Let it be on its firm feet before taking it to task for its working.

Calcutta is the largest city of India. Formerly it commanded the leadership of this country. It should do so even now. But it is not the old Calcutta which wielded the torch of leadership in the olden days. Nevertheless, there is one thing of which Calcutta can be proud. It has coolly accepted the storm which affected other parts of India after partition. For if Calcutta had also given itself up to bestiality, the whole country would have been in flames. The spark which was lit on August 16, 1946, when Calcutta had the taste of a general strike and direct action has not yet died down.

We are not out of the wood. We have to take out Hindus and Sikhs from Sind, for despite all assurances of protection, they cannot remain there for a day. Those assurances are empty words. Everybody knows that from the peon right up to the Governor there is not a Hindu or Sikh in the services.

Authorities in Pakistan wish to compel people to stay. The present situation is thus fraught with difficulties. Only this morning I saw a long statement by Mr. Muhammad Zafrullah Khan in which

he had brought in Junagadh along with Kashmir, but there is no parallel. In regard to Kashmir we say it is better to have an open fight than to have disguised warfare such as has been going on. It is for this reason that we have gone to the U N O to have the issue finally settled.

But in Junagadh things have settled themselves without a fight. The Dewan had asked for our intervention and the Nawab fled. The 'Provincial Government' started from the Junagadh territory itself and did not get any support either from the Indian Dominion or from its population. There is, therefore, nothing common between Junagadh and Kashmir. But even then we have made it plain that plebiscite would be the deciding factor in the Kashmir situation.

But how can any plebiscite be held when fighting is going on? If we have ultimately to save Kashmir by the sword, where is the scope for a plebiscite? I should like to make one thing clear, that we shall not surrender an inch of the Kashmir territory to anybody.

As regards the controversy of a secular *versus* a Hindu State, there can be no serious talk of a Hindu State. But one fact is indisputable. There are 4½ crores Muslims in India many of whom helped the creation of Pakistan. How can one believe that they will change overnight?

The Muslims say that they are loyal citizens and therefore why should anybody doubt their bonafides? To them, I would say: "Why do you ask us. Search your own conscience?"

So far as Pakistan is concerned, India only

wishes to be left alone. I would tell Pakistan, "You have now got Pakistan. I wish you the joy of it. It is only when your teeth are soured that you need come back to us. You want to make Pakistan a heaven on earth. We ourselves welcome it, for after all we shall also benefit from it."

But the Pakistan authorities say that their enemies are conspiring to destroy Pakistan. I would say to them that the enemies of Pakistan are not outside Pakistan but inside. We generously treated Pakistan in the matter of the division of assets, but at the same time we could not obviously tolerate even a pie to be used for making bullets to shoot at us. The settlement is like a consent decree. The decree will be executed when the outstanding points are satisfactorily settled. This they represent as repudiation. If we wish to repudiate it, why should we have come to any settlement at all.

I would, therefore, earnestly plead that Pakistan authorities should reflect on the course which they have adopted. I can assure them that we have nothing but their good at heart and we want nothing more than to be left in peace. Let them, therefore, create conditions in which both the Governments can settle down to their responsibilities and to the tasks of amelioration which demand urgent attention.

The need of the hour, it is commonly agreed, is that India must produce more in order to exist as an independent country. India also has an opportunity of assuming the leadership of Asia, but this opportunity will be missed if we cannot set our own economy in order and develop our industries to such an extent as to be able to meet the requirements of deficit countries in Asia.

But when we ask them to produce more, the people are advised to go slow by some elements. This is not serving India's interests at all. Instead, it is the surest way of losing the freedom which we have secured after so much sacrifice of blood and toil.

Let us not act like the monkey who failed to appreciate the worth of a jewel. We old men have fulfilled our life's mission but the young men have now to shoulder the burden. If they fail, India will perish and along with it labour will also go the way of ruin.

I thank you all for the warmth of reception you have accorded me. I recognize this as symbolic of the loyalty which the Congress still commands. Despite the shock which partition has given to Bengal you all have stood firm in your support to the Congress. I would assure you that we all have suffered a blow along with you, but it is no use eating the fruit when it is still unripe. We shall not ask Pakistan to come back to us until it has realized its error. You should think of the future and the past will take care of itself.

I can tell you this that if we had not accepted partition, India would have fallen into bits. Now that we have been able to salvage a major part of India and have been able to build it up into an extensive single unit, let us make it powerful. If we become prosperous and powerful, I have no doubt that small bits of territory around India would themselves seek our shelter.

If young men behave with discipline and if we unite our ranks, we shall certainly achieve that destiny. The world is looking at us to see how we

avail ourselves of our hard-won freedom. Let us not do anything which would make us hang our heads in shame. Instead, let us act in a manner which would not only rehabilitate the prestige and reputation which we have lost by the recent unfortunate events but also enhance it and carve out for India a glorious place in the comity of nations.

SPEECH AT LUCKNOW

January 6, 1948.

[Sardar Patel's Lucknow speech was particularly addressed to the Muslims. The speech was a delightful example of plain speaking, which only a friend of the Muslims was capable of doing.]

Our achievements of the last four months have to some extent restored the country's prestige it had lost, by the unfortunate happenings following partition, in the eyes of the world. I appeal to the younger generation to assist us in consolidating India and making her impregnable.

The maintenance of communal and industrial peace is essential if the newly-born independent democratic State of India is to lead the Asian countries on the road to progress and emancipation from foreign domination.

I am a true friend of the Muslims although I have been described as their greatest enemy. I believe in plain speaking. I do not know how to mince matters. I want to tell them frankly that mere declarations of loyalty to the Indian Union will not help them at this critical juncture. They must give practical proof of their loyalty.

I ask them why they do not unequivocally denounce Pakistan for attacking Indian territory

with the connivance of Frontier tribesmen. Is it not their duty to condemn all acts of aggression against India ?

I invite the R. S. S. to join the Congress and not to weaken the administration by creating unrest in the country. I realize that they are not actuated by selfish motives but the situation warrants that they should strengthen the hands of the Government and assist in maintaining peace. By using violence they cannot render true service to the country.

The ever-changing, undecisive and non-committal attitude of Pakistan must be changed. The Pakistan Government should change policy in her own interest. The Junagadh and Kashmir incidents have demonstrated her intentions. If you want to divide the rest of India also, say it boldly, and let us decide the issue in open field. The Pakistan leaders have accused the Congress of sabotaging Pakistan ; that is far from the truth. The establishment of Pakistan has been advocated as a heaven for Muslims. We should be glad if they make it a heaven. They must realize that the enemies of Pakistan are inside it and not outside. If Pakistan collapses, she would collapse by its own mistakes and sins.

Today I think of those days when in this city of Lucknow the foundation of the Two Nations Theory was laid. It was said that Muslim culture and tradition were not akin to those of the Hindus. Muslims were a separate nation. Muslims of this place played a very important role in advocating this theory.

A few Nationalist Muslims protested against it.

They combined with the Hindus because both were perturbed by the advocacy of such theory and raised their voice. But my Muslim League brothers made a strong plea for separation. They said that they were not satisfied with separate electorates and safeguards of minority rights. They wanted separation and the establishment of a separate State.

Throughout the length and breadth of India the Muslim Leaguers spread the doctrine of separation. Muslim youth particularly came under their influence. They accepted it as the whole truth. Consequently, a wall was raised between them and those who were in the Congress.

In Calcutta on August 15, a Direct Action Movement was launched by them to give a direct blow to those who still did not believe in the Two-Nations theory. We then thought that if there had to be a division of the country, let it be divided. Let them manage their own affairs and we will manage our own. After all, we had to drive out a foreign power; we were then facing the problem of getting rid of an alien rule. So we accepted the division of the country and thought we would see the partition question later.

I shall be glad if the Muslim Leaguers can make Pakistan a 'heaven'. I will be happy if Pakistan becomes strong, happy and prosperous. But we had not thought that even after separation we shall not have breathing time. It is said today that plans for sabotaging Pakistan are being hatched in Hindustan. But I assure you all that the plan for destroying Pakistan is not being hatched in Hindustan. If it is being hatched at all, it is being done in Pakistan. It is the situation in Pakistan itself that will ruin Pakistan.

Sometimes they accuse the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Central Government of creating troubles. But I tell you that if Pakistan falls, it will fall not on account of us but on account of its own enemies within.

The Muslim Leaguers call me their greatest enemy. Formerly they used to call Mahatma Gandhi as enemy number one. Now they think Gandhiji is their friend, and they have substituted me in his place, because I speak the truth. They believed that if they get Pakistan, they would ensure full protection for the Muslims. But have they ever looked at the Muslims living in Hindustan? Have they ever sympathized with them?

When freedom was won, there came the Punjab massacre, which had lowered our prestige. Then came the Junagadh issue followed by the Kashmir problem.

We raised the question with Pakistan. They replied: "We are not concerned." It was the Azad Government Dal in Kashmir and Kashmir Muslims who were responsible for aggression. But it is no secret that the Frontier tribesmen are receiving rations, war material, motor trucks and petrol from Pakistan. As a last resort India Government has referred the Kashmir issue to the U N O.

I want to ask Indian Muslims only one question. In the recent All-India Muslim Conference, why did you not open your mouth on the Kashmir issue? Why did you not condemn the action of Pakistan?

These things create doubt in the minds of the people. So I want to say a word as a friend of

Muslims and it is the duty of a good friend to speak frankly. It is your duty now to sail in the same boat with other Indians, and sink or swim together. I want to tell you very clearly that you cannot ride on two horses. You select one horse, whichever you like best.

In the Constituent Assembly, one of the Lucknow Muslim Leaguers pleaded for separate electorates and reservation of seats. I had to open my mouth and say that he could not have it both ways. Now he is in Pakistan. Those who want to go to Pakistan can go there and live in peace. Let us live here in peace to work for ourselves.

The Muslim League Government in Pakistan declared that they would make suitable arrangements for the minorities living there. But ask the Sind Hindu refugees today. They say it is impossible to remain there. Pakistan is drifting towards lawlessness. There are about eight to ten lakhs of Hindus who want to come out of Pakistan. Some say eight to ten lakhs of Muslims should be driven out of Hindustan. But this is not a sound policy.

Let them pursue their policy in Pakistan. We are not at all disturbed. If they want to fight, we are 32 crores here. We have also men, materials and resources. Pakistan is a baby of yesterday. But it is not wise to mete out the same treatment to the Muslims as the Hindus are receiving there,

I understand there is an urge for military training among the youth. Military training is good and there is great need of it. You should now discard fighting with lathis, dagger and

brickbats. I appeal to young men of India to unify India from all sides, because they should not forget that India was lost on account of foolishness. That foolishness should not be repeated in future. But unfortunately I find the same foolishness prevailing everywhere.

If the States problem had not been properly handled, there would have been a Rajasthan. The screen of Political Department between us and the States has been withdrawn. I contacted the Rajas of various States as soon as Paramountcy was over. Most of them are real patriots. I explained to them the present political situation and apprized them of the situation in Pakistan. I also stressed the point that India was lost on account of internal feuds. They agreed with me and I am happy that they have understood me.

There are many who criticize us and complain that this has not been done, that has not been done. I have all along told them and still I say, "Let us have some time and see what we have done and what we are doing."

To critics I want to say that since August 15 when we took charge, we have done an enormous amount of work. What about the partition work, the smashing of the steel frame of bureaucracy, the division of assets and liabilities, and the refugee problem? We called a meeting of the Constituent Assembly and settled with the States. I assure you that if so much burden had fallen all of a sudden on any Government's shoulder, it would have crashed. But we did not fail. As a matter of fact, the manner in which we have discharged our onerous duties has raised our prestige in the world.

Now two things are needed for the reconstruction of India—a strong Central Government and a formidable army. By army I mean all its branches—naval, air and land forces.

If the relation between Pakistan and Hindustan continues as at present, the consequences cannot be foreseen. I am not hiding anything but I am telling bare facts. I would not like anybody to throw dust into our eyes.

I appeal to the Hindu Mahasabhaites to join the Congress. No good will be served by remaining aloof. If you think that you are the only custodians of Hinduism, you are mistaken. Hinduism preaches a broad outlook of life. There is much more tolerance in Hinduism than is usually appreciated.

I appeal to the R S S to use their wisdom and work judiciously. I ask them not to be rash and tactless. Don't be aggressive.

Those who are disloyal will have to go to Pakistan. Those who are still riding on two horses, will have to quit Hindustan.

In the Congress, those who are in power feel that by virtue of authority they will be able to arrest the R S S. By 'Danda' you cannot suppress an organization. Moreover, "Danda" is meant for thieves and 'Dakus.' The using of "Danda" will not help much. After all, R S S men are not thieves and dacoits. They are patriots. They love their country. Only their trend of thought is divergent. They have to be won over by Congressmen with love.

I appeal to the Labour leaders not to foment

strikes and create disturbances. There is no alien power. It is easy to approach us now. Why should not Labour leaders come straight to us and tell us about the grievances of Labour? The Trade Union Congress is working under the influence of Communists. The days of strike and hartal are gone. They were needed when we were fighting against a foreign power. Those tactics must cease now.

Give us time. Let us have at least three or four years truce and see what we do.

For a strong army, industries for the production of necessary material are needed. And if there are Labour strikes a strong and formidable army cannot be built up. At the last Industrial Conference the Labour leaders agreed with us, but still there was a one-day strike in Bombay. If we all proceed on these lines, India will meet a disastrous end. Unless you produce more, how will you share the profits? India is not an industrial country. She has to be industrialized first. This sort of foolishness will only put obstacles in the way of the country's progress.

SPEECH AT BOMBAY

January 16, 1948.

[In reply to the civic address presented to him on January 16 by the Bombay Municipal Corporation on his first visit to Bombay since Independence, the Deputy Prime Minister referred to Gandhiji's fast which filled his heart with agony and said that it was a shame that Gandhiji had to fast today to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity. He denounced industrial strikes and appealed for unity. "In a united India," he said, "Muslims should feel secure like the rest of the population".]

I had accepted your kind invitation to receive an address from you in October, but owing to certain difficulties I could not come at the time. I again accepted it but have come to Bombay with an anguished heart. When I left Delhi Gandhiji was fasting; but I had accepted some unavoidable commitments which I had to fulfil. My heart is full of grief even now and I am not as happy as I would have ordinarily been at the honour that you have done me by presenting me this address.

In the course of your address you have mentioned certain things which I have achieved and others which I have not. There is one thing which I accept without reservation, viz., that I served Ahmedabad Municipality to the best of my

capacity. I had unalloyed happiness in the tasks which I performed then. After all, to serve your own city must give to all of us, unmitigated pleasure and mental satisfaction which you cannot get in any other sphere. Further to cleanse the dirt of a city is quite different from cleansing the dirt of politics. From the former you get a good night's rest, while the latter keeps you worried and disturbed even at night.

Whatever else you have said is merely a proof of your love and I do not deserve your praise. You have mentioned about my having gone to jail several times. I was only one of the thousands who did so. We were all soldiers of freedom's army. I never realized that I was in prison. Actually it were the officers who watched us that felt that they were in prison. The only worry which affected us was what was happening outside. To tell you quite frankly, if as a result of what I have been doing at the Centre, I get imprisonment I would welcome it, because from experience I have found imprisonment is much sweeter.

As a result of our freedom's struggle we have succeeded in eliminating foreign domination. But all that we had aspired for has not been achieved. We had hoped to achieve peace by getting rid of foreign domination. Actuated by the same motives we accepted partition, but subsequent events presented a different shape of things. Our prestige went up when we secured independence, but subsequent events have brought it down. If in spite of having achieved independence Gandhiji has to fast today in order to achieve real Hindu-Muslim unity, it is a standing shame to us. In brief, our happiness at having won freedom has received a rude shock.

We have just now heard people shouting that Muslims should be removed from India. Those who do so have gone mad with anger. A lunatic is something better than a person who is mad with rage. One can be treated and perhaps cured, but the other loses complete control of himself. They do not realize that they stand to gain nothing by driving out a handful of Muslims. At the same time, we have to sympathise with these people who have lost their dear ones and their valuables. I have just now come from Rajkot. Thousands are coming to Kathiawar deprived of everything that they possessed. Anger rules their heart and turns their minds completely. But we have to tolerate all this. At the same time, so long as we are in Government, we have to govern. If we cannot act as trustees for the entire population, irrespective of religion, caste or creed, we do not deserve to be where we are. Shouts like these cause me worry and agony. I frankly ask myself, "Are we to admit before the world that we are not fit to rule?"

All sorts of conjectures have been made about Gandhiji's fast. The truth is that, while there is peace in Delhi, as you have in Bombay or elsewhere in India, Gandhiji says that this is the peace maintained by force and does not represent the unity of the heart. Gandhiji speaks, thinks and acts on an eminence which we cannot attain. We long to reach there, but we simply do not have the capacity to do so. He has reached a height where he is not swayed by anger or malice. He is full of love and affection. If we had such a pure heart as he has, we would have realized the difference. We cannot, therefore, govern as he would like us to do. Instead, we have to maintain the police and a strong army. The guilty have to be punished and wrongdoers have to be censured. Those who indulge

in such shoutings must, therefore, realize what the consequences of breaking the law would be.

I am a frank man. I say bitter things to Hindus and Muslims alike. At the same time, I maintain as I have said a number of times, that I am a friend of Muslims. If Muslims do not accept me as such, they also act like mad men. They do not seem to understand the right or the wrong. But, for their attitude, I cannot forsake truth. I cannot descend from the pedestal of duty. Some of them went to Gandhiji and complained about my Lucknow speech in which I had criticized them for not condemning Pakistan's attitude to Kashmir. They went and told Gandhiji many things and Gandhiji felt compelled to defend me. That also pained me, for after all, I am not a weak person who should be defended by others.

You have referred to what we have been able to achieve, but I want you to realize that what we have achieved is incomplete. The real task is still in front of us, namely, the planning of the shape of things in the future in this country. Opportunities for doing so have come, but we do not seem to realize it. If we did so, we would not be acting in the manner in which we are doing at present.

The supreme task of the moment is to live up to the real spirit of what you have recounted in the address. It is in that spirit that we have decided to hand over Rs. 55 Crores which we had agreed to allocate to Pakistan out of our cash balances. I can assure you that when we settled this sum we acted in a spirit of generosity and goodwill. The Financial Adviser of the Pakistan Government admitted that the settlement was generous; the *London Economist* was also of the same view. I made it clear then

that not on any single item would I go before the Tribunal; but at the same time, I emphasized that the whole agreement would be implemented simultaneously with the settlement on other issues. I could never have agreed to the proposition that all gains were theirs and losses ours. They, however, claimed it in isolation. We all decided that this was entirely wrong, and it should be resisted. Pakistan papers and spokesmen, when they heard of it, emitted poison. When Gandhiji undertook the fast, we thought we could clear the atmosphere. For, after all, when we are throwing money like water, why should we cavil at the payment of Rs. 55 Crores if it meant some relief to Gandhiji's mental agony? We hope it will evoke some response from Pakistan. But if it does not, the fault is of our fate. It is true we have to take the people with us. But we have also to think of Gandhiji. We take a short-range view, while he takes a long-range one.

To all outward appearance, there is peace in Bombay City, but it is not the peace which existed here ten years ago, when the poison that has spread during the last seven years had not spoiled the atmosphere. When that peace will return, we do not know. We should, however, make efforts to that end. If we fail, we can only curse our stars. For it would be a misfortune of India.

Nevertheless, we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that we have achieved something by making India more united today than it was at any time during the past several centuries. We should unite more, but that requires a determined effort. In such united India, Muslims should feel as secure as the rest of the population. For this, however, Muslims will have also to change their outlook. They must

forget the lesson which has been taught to them of the Two-Nations theory. We have to create an atmosphere in which Pakistan can go the way it likes, and India can follow its own course. In creating this atmosphere, Bombay must play a leading part. You are distant from the scene of misery, privation and devastation. The bloodshed in Pakistan flows down to Delhi, and turns peoples' minds. Here you can take a detached view. The nation's leader, Jawaharlal, has during the last few months, aged by ten years. He is indescribably worried and anguished. I appeal to you to reflect on what is happening. Here you have token strikes merely to test leadership. Why should they have recourse to it? We can give them in writing that they are the leaders. If we cannot set our own house in order, we can never achieve the destiny of this country. There was a time when India's message had gone to other countries. Gandhiji re-enacted those scenes when he sent out the message of ahimsa, but now we seem to have fallen on different ways. We have to get out of this mess.

You have also referred to the needs of your Corporation and the scheme of Greater Bombay. You have asked for Central assistance. But you should realize that the Central Government is not foreign to you. It is your own. Bombay contributes to the Centre. You get your own money back. I realize that Bombay has to bear the burden, but Bombay occupies a pre-eminent position. It is the centre of political activity. India looks to Bombay for assistance. You have reversed the process and wish now to look to the Centre for help. How can we resolve this conundrum? If we assist one city, others will claim similar assistance. Bombay is only one city, but India is there. We cannot live on the capital accumulated by our

predecessors. We must increase our income. We cannot for ever subsist on the reputation of our giants of the past like Sir Phirozeshah Mehta and Sir Dinshah Wacha. The old days, when they ruled the city, are no more. Those days people were easily satisfied. Now they are in a perennial state of unrest. You have, therefore, to suffer criticism. But Bombay is fortunate in that it has maintained its reputation and pride of achievement and jealously guards its interests. Let the city ever be in the forefront of the cities of the world.

I had been to Calcutta. There I pointed out that the premier city of India did not deserve to be the dirtiest. But nobody dare amend the Corporation Act without which any improvement is impossible. Here you have a constitution given by those old giants which has stood the test of times and proved to be an invaluable guide. You have now given franchise to all adults. Some are apprehensive, but you can take your voters with you by demonstrating your spirit of service and presenting them with solid achievements.

I once again thank you for your kindness in presenting me with this address and I assure you that I shall always value this token of your affection and regard.

DUTIES OF LABOUR

January 20, 1948.

[The future of the country depends upon increased production of goods. Sardar Patel exhorted the workers to remember that they do not work mainly for their maintenance but that they had a social obligation to keep away from strike fever.]

I was anxious for a long time to come to Bombay, but there were so many problems to tackle that I had not been able to do so till four days ago. Bombay has always a soft corner in my heart because it has given the lead to the rest of India for many decades and I hope it will continue to do so.

The recent disturbances after partition caused worry, but I am glad that now there is a marked improvement in the communal situation and that peace has been established. Now that the country has achieved freedom, it is in our hands to make or mar our future ; and, therefore, every effort should be made to make the nation happy and prosperous so that it might uplift itself and also rise in the estimation of the world.

The future depends on how far we step up our production of food, cloth, steel, cement and other

essential articles both for the civil population and defence needs. This is necessary not only for banishing hunger and disease from the country but also for consolidating the freedom which we have won after so many years of struggle.

Labour is today at the cross-roads; if they take the right road and contribute all their energies to strengthen the country, India will have a glorious future; but if they are misled and take the wrong road, they will go down into the ditch, and it will lead everyone, labourer as well as the others, to destruction and ruin.

The workers should remember that they do not work only for their maintenance. They are not animals who are driven by the whip. They should realize their important role in the country and ask themselves what they are working for. On their efficiency and hard work depends the greatness of the country. They should realize the effects of their action on crores of their semi-starved and meagrely clothed countrymen in the villages. It is the workers' duty to think of them. Nothing should be done to harm their interests.

When the Socialist young men called for a token strike, the result was tremendous loss in wages and production. To an average worker, it meant a day's holiday and the loss of one day's wage. But did they realize the collective losses in wages, the lakhs of yards of cloth which remained unproduced and the loss of much-needed essential goods. There is already acute scarcity of rationed cloth; what can be gained by reducing it further. True leadership lies in convincing labour to stand by the nation and deliver the goods and not in destructive efforts to assert their leadership.

The recent three-year industrial truce agreed upon in Delhi was meant for undertaking an all-out industrial drive for making India strong and prosperous. Pandit Nehru's fervent broadcast appeal the previous day also called upon them to avoid strikes at all costs. The Port Trust workers' strike in Bombay is an illustration of the utter futility of such strikes prompted by reckless leadership. It was holding up food imports which were urgently needed to avert hunger in many parts of the country and of lakhs of refugees pouring in from the Punjab and Sind. This was Government work where the profit-motive is not involved, unlike in the case of private enterprise. Consequently, in the interests of our own people, army units had to be employed and the full responsibility for unemployment of these labourers rested squarely on irresponsible leaders.

The workers must keep always before them the interests of crores of our countrymen and throw off the destructive leadership, and muster strong to support the best interests of the country . . .

If the Socialists are bent upon snatching the leadership, we have no objection to handing it over to them. After all our mission has been accomplished. We do not want to hand over a ruined concern but a going concern for constructive progress but not for wrecking the future of the country. The Socialists threaten to break away from the Congress. The doors are open. But I would urge them not to mar the progress of the young nation which has after all got the rare opportunity to mould itself according to its dreams and desires after many hundreds of years.

I would earnestly like to persuade you to keep

away from this strike fever, since "produce or perish" is the crucial question facing us at this juncture. Otherwise you would yourselves stand to suffer the consequences. The freedom that we secured is for regenerating the country and not for bringing it down. Tremendous natural resources lie hidden under our soil. Why not exploit them to the best advantage? Why not increase production in cloth, steel, cement, etc., and solve the housing and other acute problems? Why not produce more coal and other essential goods so that India may be great and strong and none may dare challenge her security? Why not be self-sufficient in vital needs now imported at tremendous cost? If there is surplus production, it can be exported to make the nation prosperous.

I advise you, therefore, that if you want more wages you should increase productivity and step up production. There is really no difference of opinion between the Congress and the Socialists over policy and progress as was illustrated at the last A.-I.C.C. meeting. Why then all these disruptive and disintegrating activities? I would request the Socialists to join hands with the Congress in formulating a five-year programme and carrying it out in a constructive spirit to make the nation strong. The country needs two things, first, peace on the basis of Hindu-Muslim unity and, secondly, consolidation as was exemplified by the merger of States.

When I say bitter things to industrialists, Socialists and labour, it is not my intention to hurt their feelings, but there is a fire raging in my heart which I want to impart to them. I am speaking to them so bluntly because I have their interests at heart; and I ask you not to be misled by the sweet

words of those who are really your enemies. The proposed labour rally was intended to show the backing of ten lakh workers behind the Port Trust, but I would like you to remember that this rare opportunity of creating a strong and happy India is fast passing from their hands.

Bombay should see that there is no strike during the period of industrial truce, for the next three years, and that production goes on full stream ahead. If there is any grievance it should be carried to Government which is your own and I am sure it would be satisfactorily solved. I myself am all for your getting the legitimate fruits of your labour. The Congress stands by you. Where then is the need for strikes, 'go slow' tactics or stoppage of work ?

RECOVERY OF ABDUCTED WOMEN

February 18, 1948.

[In the disturbances consequent on the Partition, abduction of women was a crime which was resorted to most widely in the East Punjab as well as in the West Punjab. Sardar Patel did not fail to raise his powerful voice against this inhuman crime.]

I am taking this opportunity of adding a few words to the powerful appeals which have already been made on behalf of the thousands of distressed women. During the recent disturbances which overspread both West and East Punjab and the Frontier and enmeshed a part of the beautiful Kashmir Valley and Jammu Province, nothing has degraded us more than the foul crimes and barbarities which have been inflicted on innocent women and children, who have been forcibly torn from their kith and kin and subjected to most inhuman indignities and violence. Even the law of the jungle does not countenance such insensate wrongs; these are completely alien to the traditions of any society and civilization. There should be no place, therefore, in this world for wrongdoers of this type and it behoves us all to see that such transgressions of civilized conduct are put down with a strong and firm hand.

When I think of the sorrowful plight and

miserable sufferings of these mothers and sisters, my heart fills with distress and grief. Women of education and breeding many of whom had been nourished in the lap of luxury; all had led a peaceful and sheltered existence with those with whom they had ties of blood and affection; many were valuable treasures of poor men's houses, which are now left desolate and ruined—all these have been uprooted from their natural surroundings and placed by the cruel hands of frenzied criminals into conditions of existence which shame humanity and all the virtues and qualities which go to make God's own creature, man.

To rescue them from these living conditions and restore them to their original environments is, therefore, an essential mission if men's reputation is to be rehabilitated as that of human beings. Failure in this mission would mean that we are not fit to face the bar of human history and must go down to the future ages as those who degraded humanity to depths lower than those of beasts.

Those who have braved adversity and challenged obstructions and obstacles in this noble undertaking have deserved well of the nation and humanity whose cause they have tried to uphold. The results they have achieved may appear slight when compared to the dimensions of the problem, but if we consider how much concentrated effort, public zeal, and patience and grit have been expended on the achievement of these results, we would be able to appreciate not only what has been done, but also what requires to be done to salvage these treasures from the wrecks of human civilization.

It is obvious that an enterprise of such gigantic proportions cannot be successfully accomplished if:

we do not have both popular and official support. Such support must therefore, be given by the Government and the people in both India and Pakistan. To withhold it would be contrary not only to solemn undertakings entered into by both the Governments, but also to all laws of social existence and codes of honour.

We have also to awaken the conscience of those who have perpetrated these wrongs or who have now acquired possession of these women as though they were goods and chattels for sale or articles of prize and booty. I would appeal to them to realize their error and to reflect what stakes are involved in their persistence in the wrong course which they have adopted. Neither the sacred name of religion which might have been invoked by them in perpetrating these wrongs, nor the desire for vengeance, retaliation or plunder which might have actuated them can ever be pleaded in extenuation of the enormity of their misdeeds. Only repentance and restoration of the wrongs committed can bring them back into the fold of normal human beings.

This is, therefore, their opportunity for reclamation. Let them listen to the voice of their own conscience, to the injunctions of their own religion, to the rules of their own Society, to the principles of their own existence and to the codes of honour and chivalry. Let them reflect on how they themselves would have felt if their own womenfolk had to share the fate which, through their instrumentality, has befallen these innocent victims of human folly and lust. I have no doubt that if they bestow a moment's thought to these considerations, they will themselves realize the errors of their ways and offer to facilitate the task of all those who are engaged in this mission of rescue and succour.

I should also like to add a word to those unfortunate and grief-stricken relations who have lost their mothers, wives and sisters. I can well imagine what torments affect their minds and what agony afflicts their hearts. I also know that many are facing and are prepared to face perils of all kinds to get back their dear ones. I have not come across any who is not anxious to claim them back into his home. I would advise them not to lose heart but to persist in their efforts to trace them. After all, where so many thousands are involved, it is impossible for official agencies alone to discover or follow the track. Individual or collective non-official effort, backed by official support, would probably achieve much more than mere official action. I hope, therefore, that neither disappointments nor temporary setbacks will damp their ardour and that they will pursue their task with doggedness and determination.

To the grief-stricken women, themselves, I should like to send a message of sympathy and comfort. Their misery and plight have stirred our hearts. They are constantly in our thoughts. Whenever we can get at them, we will do so. They need be in no doubt either of the genuineness of the anxiety of their relations to claim them back or the zeal and intensity of the efforts to rescue them. I realize what cups of bitterness and miseries they must be drinking every minute or hour of their life, but patience and faith have moved mountains and melted the coldest hearts. Let them, therefore, persist in both, and I am sure they will invoke God's blessings for the success of their rescuers and awaken the conscience of the wrongdoers.

SPEECH AT ALWAR

February 25, 1948.

[Sardar Patel's visit to Alwar after the taking over temporarily of the administration of the State by the Government of India, was the occasion of the speech which in its frankness and forthrightness is perfectly matchless a statement.]

Small States cannot subsist as independent entities any longer without endangering Indian unity. We are trying to achieve national unity. Many Rulers have realized their duty by merging themselves in bigger entities. Can Rajasthan afford to lie low? It has to march with the times.

It is your privilege and duty to bear the sword. It is equally your responsibility to ensure that the sword is not used to harass the weak, but to protect them. You should use it in a manner that the world will say you are inheritors of an ancient civilization and are true to the real traditions of the chivalry of Rajasthan.

You have to remember that you are born in a country which has produced a great saint like Gandhiji whose lifelong mission it was to plead for and espouse the cause of the weak, the down-trodden and the outcast.

You are aware of the circumstances which

compelled the Government of India to take over the administration of Alwar. Events had occurred which brought the State a bad name. The Maharaja may or may not be at fault, but the fact remains that his name became involved and has to be cleared.

The moment his name is cleared there will be no objection to his return to Alwar.

People and Rulers alike must realize that the old traditions of rule cannot be carried on. The times are changing, new ideologies and new traditions now hold the field. Our power is not going to relax merely because there is a section of the people who still dream of the power of their sword and still think of carving out a kingdom for themselves.

It is to Gandhiji that we all owe our freedom. For the unspeakable tragedy of his murder we all have to bear the responsibility. Alwar also shares the blame. Why were the people of Alwar sleeping when a person in the garb of a sadhu was distributing leaflets which asked for Gandhiji's death in a most brutal and criminal fashion ?

I wonder whether people appreciate that they would not be able to safeguard the freedom they have won if the signs that are already visible persist in their fateful course. Freedom was not won by the sword and will not be protected by guns alone. Guns can protect freedom from aggressive designs of neighbours or other foreign States. But internally, it is the honest care of the people and the true realization of the responsibilities of a free citizen that will save freedom from the machinations of self-seeking and interested parties and individuals.

When Rajputana was involved in slavery, the British Government kept it steeped in old customs and traditions of internecine dissensions which had so often proved the bane of Rajputs. If after the foreigners have gone the same evil persists, how can we say that we have achieved real freedom? Such freedom can be achieved only when we realize Gandhiji's dream of Ram Raj.

Unlike what was in the past, the might of India is not concentrated in Rajputana alone. The Army is no longer the monopoly of the so-called "military" castes. Persons of all provinces and all castes have now a share in the defence of the country. It is the responsibility of every citizen to feel that the country is free, and it is his duty to protect it. Every Indian must now forget that he is a Rajput, Jat, Sikh, etc. He must remember that as an Indian he has equal claim on the country and responsibilities also.

The Rulers must understand that they are trustees of the people and servants of the State. Their relations with the people are those of father and children. They must zealously safeguard the interests of the people whose welfare must be their primary concern. In the context of present conditions it implies that they must stand out as constitutional Rulers, exercising their influence by their benevolent advice rather than by any active interference in the sphere of administration. Similarly, the people must realize their responsibility towards their Rulers by pointing out their true interests and speaking the truth.

Small States cannot now subsist as they did in the past. They have also to realize their destiny in the present scheme of things in the country. They

can only play their true and honoured part by merging themselves in bigger and more sizeable entities.

The watchword of India should be unity. India has made a tremendous sacrifice for freedom. A part of living India has been torn away. The rest cannot but be a unified whole. We are trying to achieve that unity. Many Princes have realized their duty. The Orissa, C P and Kathiawar Rulers have pointed the way by making heavy sacrifices for the sake of Indian Unity. We hope the Malwa and Bundelkhand Rulers will follow suit.

If within five or six months of India's attaining freedom all this can happen, can Rajasthan afford to lie low? It has to get up, walk about and run. That is the only way that Rajputana can march with the times. Those who are still dreaming of establishing a Rujput hegemony are clearly out of time in the present trend of circumstances.

It is the duty of the majority community to protect the minority whose interests, as it were, come as part of a trust to former. Muslims, after all, number only 4 crores, Hindus total about 30 crores. It is incumbent on them, therefore, to protect the Muslims in India.

The need for unity is great. Do not create dissensions among Praja Mandal workers. Dissensions do no good to anybody. Unity in the conduct of administration is essential in every State, more particularly is it necessary in the case of Alwar whose finances seem to be in a precarious state. The lower subordinates are ill-paid. Recurring deficits in such limited income are bound to lead to bankruptcy. All this has to be remedied.

Rajputana has yet to realize its duty. It has yet to breathe the air of freedom. Gandhiji's message of removal of untouchability has still to find an echo in every Rajput's heart . . .

I advise women to produce their own cloth and thereby contribute to the country's economy.

REPLY TO CHURCHILL

The Right Hon'ble Mr. Winston Churchill, His Majesty's Leader of the Opposition and Britain's war-time Premier, while bemoaning the disappearance of the title of Emperor of India from the Royal Titles, has indulged in a characteristically ignorant but extremely prejudiced outburst against India and its Government. Mr. Churchill's disastrous record in relation to India both as member of Government and in Opposition is well known. His intervention has every time been exercised to the violent prejudice of this country and, in the ultimate analysis, to the detriment of his own. Mr. Churchill is an unashamed imperialist and at a time when imperialism is on its last legs; he is the proverbial last ditcher for whom obstinacy and dogged consistency gain more than reason, imagination or wisdom. Many an attempt to build up friendship between India and Britain has been wrecked by his refusal to face facts and attempts to mould them to suit his own predilections. It is well-known that when the Cripps' offer was made, it was he who prevented negotiations from achieving success. It was he who every time thwarted the attempts of Mr. Roosevelt to see that justice is done to India's legitimate aspirations and its free and willing cooperation enlisted in the war effort. At the time of Lord Wavell's Simla Conference, it was he who was responsible for its break-up and failure. If any of these attempts had succeeded, the history of India and of the relationship between Britain and India, despite the bitterness and intensity of free-

dom's struggle, would have been different. We might have avoided the evil of partition and the disasters that attended it. Fortunately for Britain the cup of disasters was by then full and the British electorate decided to change the pilot. Through a realistic policy followed by the Labour Government and the bold, imaginative step taken by one of Britain's wisest statesmen, Lord Mountbatten, and the atmosphere of friendship and cordiality which he helped to create, the mischief done by the Churchill regime has been to a large extent undone. But it seems Mr. Churchill is still seized by his favourite disease Hindu-phobia and is determined to wreck all that good work by his most unwise disregard of the proverbial virtue of silence.

It might well be expected of a man of his record of office and positions of responsibility that he will exercise that discretion and restraint which are characteristic of sobriety and ripeness of official life. How far it was appropriate for him to have attacked in such terms the Government and the people of a sister Dominion, I shall leave to His Majesty's Government and the people of Great Britain to determine. I shall only say this, that we have been patient far too long with such unseemly, prejudiced and mischievous attacks by high-placed Britishers on our administration, our leaders and our people. I have not seen anything even remotely like this being said of any other member of the Commonwealth. One of them has outraged world's conscience by barefaced and wanton policy of racial prejudice and an open disregard of fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter. But Mr. Churchill's elastic conscience, with his infinite capacity for bearing wrongs done to others by his own race, has never registered even a formal protest. I should like, therefore, to tell His Majesty's Government

that if they wish India to maintain friendly relations with Great Britain they must see that India is in no way subjected to malicious and venomous attacks of this kind and that British statesmen and others learn to speak of this country in terms of friendship and goodwill. Owing to years of deep-seated prejudice and owing to ignorance, it may be difficult for some of them to do so but if future disasters are to be avoided, it has got to be done.

That Mr. Churchill's attack on India and its Government is both mischievous and venomous can be judged from the way in which he has disregarded the all-parties responsibility for the passage of the Indian Independence Act in July last year through Parliament. We ourselves foresaw that if the final stage of grant of freedom to India were made a party issue, it would enhance our difficulties manifold. We were fully aware of the machinations of the vested interests both in India and the United Kingdom to hand over as difficult a legacy to India as possible. Balkanisation of India was being actively promoted. Large-scale disturbances were being manufactured. Vandalism at the peak of impending departure from the scene of personal rule was actuating many of the Churchillian agents in power here. We, therefore, decided to drink the bitter cup and accept the lesser evil of partition, only on condition that it commanded all parties' support. That support was both promised and given. It was this agreement of all parties that secured the safe and speedy passage of the Indian Independence Act, for which there is no parallel in the history of the British Parliament. We thought Mr. Churchill was an honourable man and would abide by the obligations inherent in the agreement. But obviously he finds it hard to recognise that India is now a free and independent country.

If proof of his deep-seated prejudice and his medieval mind were needed, it would be enough to show that whilst he refers to Kashmir as being four-fifth Muslim he has *omitted to mention that Hyderabad is four-fifth Hindu, and that a creation of the eighteenth century* as the Nizam's State is suddenly by the magic of Mr. Churchill's words transformed into an "ancient State." The fact of the matter is that, to vary the words of a British statesmen, whether Mr. Churchill roars like a lion or coos like a dove, it is his ignorance and blind prejudice that must come out prominently. We can well realise what a disaster the British public avoided by forcing Mr. Churchill to give up the seals of office. We had hoped that this blow to his personal fortune administered by his people at the height of his glory would make him a sadder but wiser man. But it appears that through his ancestors, Mr. Churchill has acquired the well-known characteristic of the Stuarts of not being able to learn or unlearn anything.

Mr. Churchill has referred, apparently with some self-satisfactions to the large casualties that occurred during the disturbances more than nine months ago. Obviously it did not suit his purpose to mention that since then India had settled down to peaceful conditions with a speed and efficiency which had amazed many disinterested visitors. While not one of us would disclaim our due share of responsibility for these tragedies, and it is agreed that these have brought shame and disgrace to India, there can scarcely be any doubt that, in the ultimate analysis, a very large part of the blame must attach to the divide and rule policy followed with such masterly activity by Mr. Churchill himself and so faithfully implemented by his agents and Europeans of his way of thinking in this country, whether under his

regime or that of his predecessors. No dispassionate student of recent history of India can fail to be convinced that the partition of the country and attendant disasters were brought about by the disruptive activities of the group of which Mr. Churchill was the inspiration and the spokesman. Thus, for these tragedies it is Mr. Churchill and his henchmen who have also to answer before the bar of history.

It is not clear how far the Tory Party is behind its leader in these acts of indiscretion and unwisdom. Mr. Butlers's irrelevant reference to Hyderabad in the foreign affairs debate was the first indication of a section of the Tories still attempting to make capital out of India's troubles. Mr. Churchill's intervention in Parliament followed by his speech at a Conservative rally seems to indicate that at least an attempt is being made to whip up enthusiasm in favour of Britain's one-time "faithfully ally" against India. I should like to warn the British public against being taken in by these attempts. The question of Hyderabad can be solved peacefully if the Nizam would shed the utterly medieval conception of his rule through a ruling caste chosen almost entirely from a militant minority and accept the democratic method of consulting and acting in conformity to the wishes of his people expressed through their elected representatives and would recognize the inevitability of the consequences of action and interaction of geographical, economic and other compelling forces on the relationship between Hyderabad and India. But then in order to injure India's interests, these distinguished products of a democratic age would forget the lessons of history and the teachings of democracy and stoop to buttress a regime which still lives in the

times that it was born. If, therefore, disaster overtakes the fortunes of the Nizam, the responsibility will lie elsewhere than on the Indian Dominion. I am glad to know that His Majesty's Government have not fallen a prey to these machinations of Mr. Churchill and his henchmen and have refused to treat the Hyderabad issue otherwise than as one of domestic concern of the Indian Dominion. I would, therefore, appeal to the rank and file of the Tory Party not to be misled by these old-world ideas of some of their leaders but to extend to the Indian Dominion that goodwill and friendship which are as essential in British interest as in India's and to sustain and uphold the fine gesture they made in transferring power to Indian hands. It is only in this spirit, not on the malice and venom of Mr. Churchill's tongue, that an enduring relationship of friendship, co-operation and collaboration can be built between India and Britain and other Members of Commonwealth.

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